Cultural Context

The Islamic tradition is an important consideration for education in Afghan society. The teaching of religion will be an essential part of general education for children and young people. The Islamic religion can be a unifying factor among different ethnic groups in Afghan society. The part of religious education in the school curriculum, and the modalities of teaching could be determined in accordance with national tradition and the experience of other Islamic countries. In order to understand the Arabic text, efforts should made to translate the teaching materials into Afghan languages, as far as possible. Attention should be given to the training of religious teachers who should acquire a solid foundation and knowledge of the Islamic religion, and a broad general education with pedagogical training. The teaching of the Arabic language in Afghan religious schools and teacher training institutions should be modernized and developed in consultation with Arabic language specialists.

The ethnic diversity of Afghan society should be taken into account in formulating strategies for general education. This will be a delicate issue and concerns the teaching of the national languages, civics, history, geography, etc. It is also a matter that will be of interest to people of the same ethnic background in the neighbouring countries. There are two basic issues involved: a) the educational and cultural rights of different ethnic groups within Afghan society, in their aspirations for ethnic identity and the need for quality education; b) the requirement of a cohesive society and the development of a unified nation. This is a major problem not only in Afghanistan but also in a number of other countries around the world (the recent conflict in the Balkans was based on ethnic diversity). There is no magic solution to this problem. However, experience has shown that when the political, social and economic, and cultural rights of minorities are guaranteed in a democratic society, it is possible to develop a reasonable, harmonious nation. The time for the forceful imposition of one ideology or culture over other people is over. With regard to language teaching, the Afghan education system, since the 1940s, adopted a reasonable and practical arrangement for the use of Pashto and Dari in schools. The feasibility of using other national languages should be studied. A committee of Afghan experts should study the cultural aspects of the school curriculum and recommend educational measures to encourage reconciliation, and a 'culture of peace' among Afghan children and youth of different ethnic backgrounds. Education should promote the notion of an Afghan identity and a sense of belonging, and loyalty to Afghan society.

Science and Technology

Science and technology have played an important role in the social and economic development of industrialized and developing countries. The twenty-first century will be an era of knowledge, information and communication. Technological innovations will have to be harnessed and adapted to the needs of different societies. The application of science and technology to agriculture and industrial development will accelerate economic growth and progress. The development of science and technology institutions, the training of specialists and the promotion of applied research should be an important element of the education strategy. Programmes on science and society dealing with agriculture, health, environment, etc., through the mass media (radio and television), will contribute to improving productivity and the daily lives of the people. In view of the rapid development of science and technology, it is essential to set up a national infrastructure for the application of science and technology to the development needs of Afghanistan.

Science and technology education should be an integral part of the school curriculum, beginning with children in primary schools. Science education should be relevant to the environment, and encourage skills such as problem solving and decision making. It should motivate students for experimentation and innovation, and inculcate scientific attitudes in children and young people. The teaching of technology, including computers, should be incorporated in the school curriculum. A National Science Centre for curriculum and textbook development and the production of proto-type laboratory equipment could be an important basic infrastructure for science education. Provision should be made for the training of teachers and other key personnel for science education. Adequate modern laboratory facilities and international publications in science and technology should be envisaged for teacher training institutions and universities. The teaching of appropriate foreign (European) languages will play a significant role in science education, and the transfer of technology to Afghanistan. In view of the rapidly increasing impact of information and communication technologies on society, and their application in the education process, relevant research and training in this area should be given high priority.

The development of human resources has been a major and continuing pre-occupation of all societies. The quality and relevance of skilled workers, technicians and specialists have become critical factors in economic development. Technical and vocational education play an important role in training the manpower needed for agriculture, industry, commerce and the service sector. The education strategy in Afghanistan should promote vocationalization of education and close interaction between the education system and the world of work. This would involve the teaching of technology in general education and development of technical and vocational schools at the secondary and post-secondary levels. A flexible programme and structure, taking into account the development needs of the community, should be considered for young people and adults. The vocational schools should work with community institutions and projects to ensure the efficiency of the training. Measures should also be taken to promote and develop traditional Afghan arts and handicrafts and organize relevant training programmes.

Development Planning

Afghanistan had positive experience in educational planning from 1956 to 1978. There was a relatively significant development of education at all levels during that period. It is important to establish priorities in educational development, and provide the resources and organizational capacity to implement the educational plan. Needless to say, not only peace and tranquillity are prerequisites for development planning, but also the full cooperation of the different partners and communities is needed. To ensure the full potential of Afghan society, the education strategy should give priority to the promotion of education and training for girls and women. In relation to past experience in educational planning in Afghanistan, a number of questions will have to be answered. Given the limitation in resources, what should be the relative priority for the development of different levels of education (primary, secondary, higher)? What priority should be accorded to adult literacy? In the past the role of the public was very limited in the organization and financing of formal education. What should be the role of communities in the organization of education? How to mobilize national and international resources for the development of education? How to improve the efficiency of the education system?

With regard to educational priorities in developing countries, there is a general consensus that the highest priority should be given to compulsory primary education. It has

been recognized by many experts and decision-makers that social and economic development also depends on trained manpower (including teachers) which requires the development of secondary and higher education. The promotion of effective adult literacy programmes would depend not only on the mobilization of increased public and private resources, but also on innovative structures and methods. In 1990 a World Conference on Education for All recommended the concept of basic education, which is defined as ' the foundation for lifelong learning' using a variety of delivery systems to meet basic educational needs. The strategies for basic education involve the linking of formal and non-formal education and the development of primary schooling, or equivalent out-of-school education for children, and literacy, basic knowledge and life skills training for youth and adults.

Since 1991, with the assistance of UNESCO and non-governmental organizations, a number of basic education centres have been established in Afghanistan in cooperation with the communities concerned. These centres, which have been set up parallel to primary schools for children, respond to the basic learning needs of young people and adults and should be evaluated, with a view to further expansion in the country. An important feature of the basic education centres is the participation of communities in their organization and management. This strategy would accelerate the development of primary education and the provision of adult education. Based on past experience in literacy campaigns, a national programme for functional literacy should be prepared. The value of early childhood education (pre-primary) has been widely recognized. Provision should be made in the medium term education plan to develop pre-primary education in cooperation with communities and voluntary organizations.

Secondary education is the basis of higher education and the training of the teachers, specialists and professionals required for social and economic development. The curriculum of secondary education should include core subjects (languages, science and mathematics, social studies and technology, etc.) and electives that would permit preparation for higher education or technical and vocational education. A significant portion of secondary education graduates should be admitted to teacher training programmes, which would be required for the expansion of primary and basic education. Post-secondary and higher education structures, programmes and modalities should be flexible to meet the needs of a developing society. The programmes should be developed in consultation with the employers of higher education graduates. Provision should be made for continuing education and training as well as distance learning in higher education. The qualifications of the teaching staff and the availability of modern facilities will be critical for the quality of secondary and higher education. Provision should be made in higher education for the promotion of applied research related to development projects. The pace of development in secondary and higher education could be determined according to social and economic needs and the availability of resources. Important criteria for education strategy at the secondary and higher levels should be quality and relevance.

The development of modern education in Afghanistan has been the prerogative and responsibility of the central government and it was provided free for all citizens. The public and communities had little role in the organization or provision of formal education for their children. As the national government will not have the necessary means to provide basic education for the majority of children (less than thirty percent of Afghan children attend school in the year 2000), consideration should be given to decentralizing the development of primary education to the provinces and local communities. The Ministry of Education should set national standards and a core curriculum, assist with teacher training

and the development of basic textbooks, and provide financial support for communities, as necessary. A provincial education committee should plan and supervise the development of primary education. Such an arrangement could accelerate the provision of primary education and would make it more relevant to the environmental and cultural backgrounds of the children. It will also promote public interest in education and mobilize community resources for this purpose.

The most important factor in the development of education will be the mobilization of resources. It is expected that the government will give high priority to education in the national budget. The participation of communities in primary and basic education would increase the resources for education. The government should also consider a special tax for educational development, particularly for basic compulsory education. As the government departments, industry, enterprises and developmental projects are the beneficiary of the education system, ways and means should be found for cost-sharing in the training and provision of technical and professional personnel. While the provision of universal primary education should be free, consideration could be given to the contribution of parents, who have the means, towards the cost of education at the secondary and higher levels (e.g. by paying for textbooks).

An important source of material and intellectual support to education could be the Afghans living in Europe and the USA. There are already a number of organizations which are contributing to the education of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and to schools inside Afghanistan. There is also a significant number of Afghan professors, doctors, engineers and specialists, who would be willing to share their expertise in support of development in Afghanistan, provided the conditions of democracy, security and professionalism prevail in the country. Afghanistan's traditional bilateral cooperation with a number of European countries and the USA, especially in technical and vocational education and higher education, should be revived and strengthened. The events of the last two decades have mobilized a number of non-governmental organizations in western countries, which could be a significant source of expertise and material support for educational development in Afghanistan. The United Nations system was mobilized in the early 1990s to help with the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. With a peace settlement and the establishment of a democratic government, the international community would probably participate more significantly in educational development. In an atmosphere of peace and cooperation in the region, the strategic geopolitical situation of Afghanistan in Central Asia could generate more resources through trade and commerce as well as transit facilities.

The internal and external efficiency of the education system need to be studied. Measures should be taken to reduce wastage and dropouts in schools, and to ensure the optimum use of physical facilities including laboratories and workshops. The norms and standards in the system (e.g. pupil-teacher ratio, class size, teaching load, school hours, etc.) and the staffing and management of schools and other educational institutions should be reviewed. Provision should be made for the training of personnel in educational planning and administration, and the introduction of modern management techniques in the education system. In view of the high cost of boarding, the need and conditions for the provision of residential facilities in educational institutions should be studied. Attention should be given to the quality of education including evaluation and teachers' qualifications and the creation of an infrastructure for the modernization of content and the methods of education. Mechanisms to ensure articulation between the different levels and types of education and the provision of educational and vocational guidance should be established. Cooperation at the level of planning and the execution of programmes, between educa-

tional institutions and employers, will be essential for the external efficiency of the education system.

In future education strategies for Afghanistan, consideration should be given to a number of relevant issues: the duration of free and compulsory education; the role of central, regional and local authorities in the provision of basic compulsory education; the role of the state in the development of pre-primary education; the role of parents, private institutions, non-governmental and professional organizations in the promotion, development and financing of education; the provision of equal access to education for boys and girls, and the degree of integration of both sexes in different levels of education; the policy on the use of Pashto, Dari and other languages as the media of instruction; the national policy and standards for the curricula, text books and teachers' qualifications; the role of private publishers in the provision of textbooks and teaching materials; the academic, administrative and financial autonomy of higher education; the mobilization of the resources and funding of education.

Functional Education System

The current education structure for general education (6+3+3), and four years of higher education for the first university degree should be continued. However, consideration should be given in due course to increasing basic compulsory education from six years to eight years which would modify the structure of general education to (8+4). Eight years of compulsory education has been adopted by a number of developing countries, with a view to preparing the majority of young people for active life. This structure was introduced in Afghanistan for a few years during the education reform of 1975. It should be reconsidered in the context of a long-term strategy for education. Secondary education should offer a core curriculum with options for academic or technical/commercial education. Technical and vocational education (based on eight to nine years of general education) could provide short courses (one to two years), full secondary vocational education (three years) or post-secondary technical education (two to three years after secondary education). Post-secondary and university education could be two years, four years or more, depending on the objectives and level of training required.

There should be a unified national policy for curriculum, textbooks and education standards. A national infrastructure for curricula and standards would be required. The regulations concerning the admission of students, the organization of schools, the application of the curriculum, teachers' qualifications, examination and certification, should be reviewed by committees of experts, and adapted to the needs of a modern education system. The organization, supervision and development of basic education (primary and middle schools) could be delegated to provincial authorities and local communities. Within a broad national curriculum for general education, provision should be made for the local adaptation of the curriculum. On the basis of defined syllabuses, private publishers should be encouraged to produce textbooks and teaching materials. National examinations should be organized at the end of secondary education (baccalaureat). The responsibility for the organization of examinations at the end of primary and middle schools should be delegated to provincial Directors of Education. The national centre for curricula and standards provides guidance and model examination materials for the use of local and provincial education authorities.

Three levels of technical workers will be trained: skilled workers, technicians and engineers. The curricula and standards of technical and vocational education should be

determined in consultation with the appropriate organizations and specialists in agriculture, commerce and industry and the service sector. A national centre for preparing occupation profiles and standards and the development of curricula and training materials in technical and vocational education will be needed. Technical and vocational education will be carried out in close cooperation with the government departments concerned and community and development projects and private enterprises. Measures need to be taken to improve the system (in terms of the modernization of equipment, the provision of new technologies and innovation in the education process and teachers' qualifications) to ensure the quality and relevance of training. Programmes for retraining and continuing the education of adults will be an important element of technical and vocational education, in the perspective of modernization and training throughout life. On the basis of existing institutions and models, steps should be taken to develop an integrated national system and structure for technical and vocational education. The arts and crafts schools should be renovated and developed. In partnership with other stakeholders, ways and means should be explored to expand and finance technical and vocational education and training.

Within unified national standards, flexible structures and innovative methods (including distance learning) for higher education should be developed. This would involve the universities, teacher training colleges, and post-secondary technical, agricultural, commercial and management institutions. The higher education institutions should be able to grant certificates and diplomas (after one to three years of study), Licence (equivalent to BA or BSc.), Masters' and higher degrees in certain fields including MD. The system should aim at developing centres of excellence and appropriate mechanisms for sharing expertise and facilities. Measures need to be taken to encourage and facilitate applied research linked to the development needs of the country. Cooperation among Afghan institutions of higher education and relevant centres abroad, including the regional and international networks of universities established by UNESCO, should be encouraged. Professional organizations of teachers and academic members of universities should be set up for the exchange of information and cooperation, participation in international scientific and educational projects and the promotion of quality and standards for education.

The programme of higher education institutions will be developed in accordance with the social and economic needs of the country. The preparation of teachers for the education system will be an important role for higher education. The admission policy in higher education should be based on merit, with provision for the promotion of girls and women and disadvantaged groups. The programme of study could be organized on the credit system to permit flexibility in higher education, including alternate periods of work and study. Measures need to be taken to improve the quality and efficiency of higher education through the provision of textbooks and library services, and the use of new information and communication technologies. The teaching of appropriate foreign languages in higher education would be important for the quality of education. To ensure the adequacy of training, cooperation will have to be developed between institutions of higher education and relevant programmes and projects in different sectors of the economy, social services and government. The higher education institutions should have academic and management autonomy, under the overall supervision of a Ministry of Higher Education. The participation of students, parents and communities in the financing of higher education should be considered.

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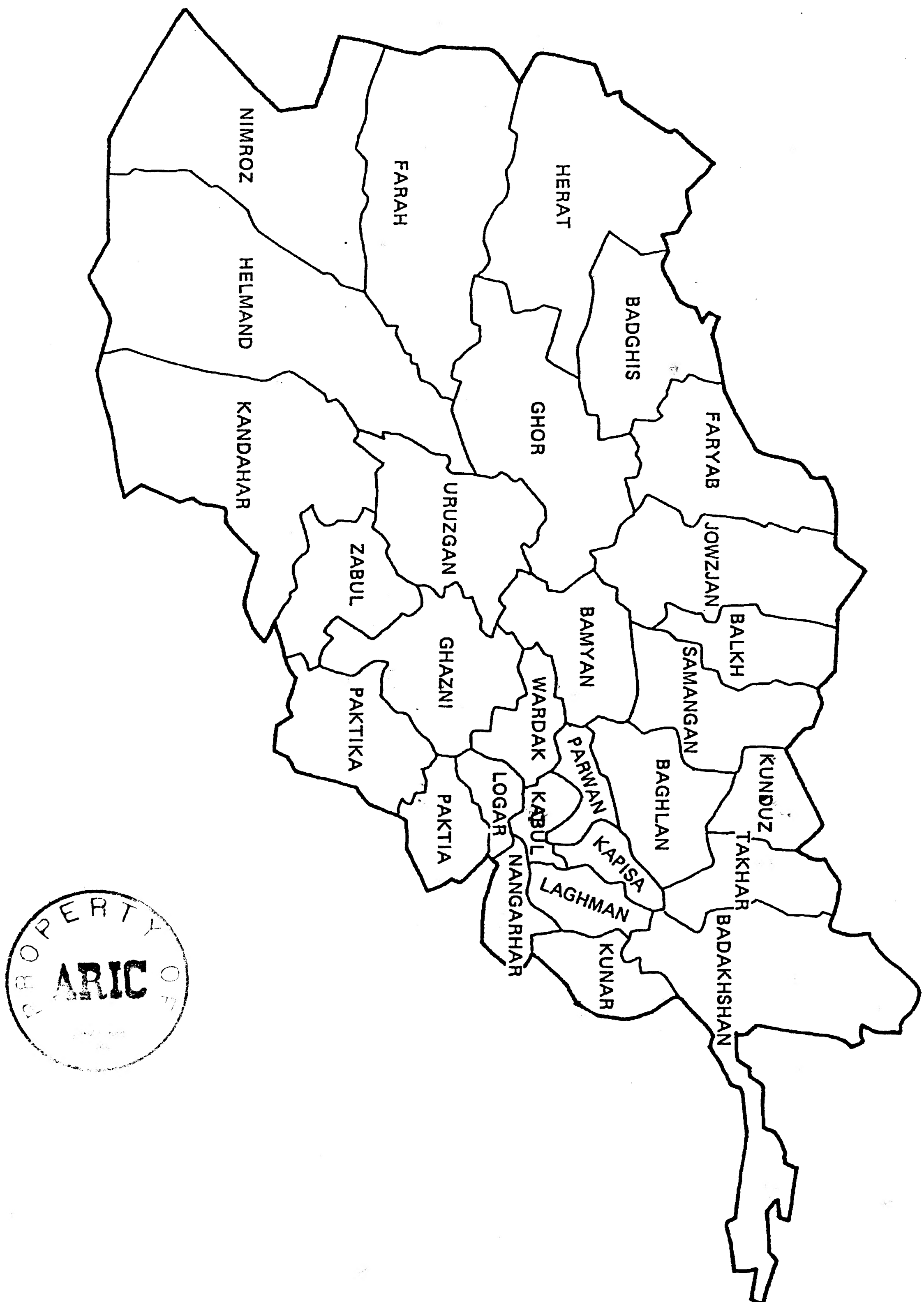
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number of countries including Turkey, France and Germany, and the availability of foreign teachers, expertise and scholarships for Afghan students, contributed to the development of modern education in Afghanistan. For the first time, a number of Afghan male and female students were sent to Turkey and other countries in Europe to study. The government policy promoted social progress through education.

In January 1929 King Amanullah abdicated following civil strife provoked by external forces and supported by ultra-conservatives in the country. Some historians believe that the government's modernization programme including its education and cultural policies were too progressive for a traditional Afghan society. Soon after the departure of King Amanullah, the city of Kabul was captured by Habibullah Kalakani who was against modernization. This was a set-back for education in Afghanistan, as all modern schools were closed. In 1929 Nader Shah became the King of Afghanistan. Once again the schools were reopened and attention was given to the development of education. A Constitution promulgated in 1931 referred to the responsibility of the government for the provision of universal primary education for Afghan children. Nader Shah was assassinated by a student in 1933, and his son Zaher Shah, at the age of nineteen years, became the king of Afghanistan (the government was headed by one of his uncles).

In the 1930s the development of education in Afghanistan was limited for a number of reasons. Based on the experience and lessons of the 1920s, there was a slowing down of the modernization programmes including educational development. The political priorities in the 1930s were the maintenance of internal security and the consolidation of the State, taking into account the tribal and ethnic nature of Afghan society. Social and economic measures including the education policy aimed at sustaining a traditional agricultural society. The majority of rural communities had no schools and continued the education of their children, in the traditional way, at home and in the mosques. By 1940, with an estimated population of about ten million people, there were 60,000 pupils in 324 schools with 1,990 teachers throughout Afghanistan.

In the 1940s attention was given to the development of a few secondary schools and the beginning of higher education, but there were no plans for a systematic development of education. During the Second World War (1939-1944), in which Afghanistan remained neutral, some schools were affected by the departure of foreign teachers. Furthermore, the machinery and laboratory equipment for schools and training institutions could not be imported. Following the Second World War, two major political decisions contributed to the development of education. First, there was some political reform (including the formation of a relatively liberal government headed by another uncle of the King), and the beginning of a short-lived democratic movement, with a new Constitution and an elected parliament. The new Constitution made primary education compulsory for all Afghan children (boys and girls), wherever the government could provide the facilities. Second, the government decided to coordinate and reinforce national economic activities, and undertake a number of projects including prospecting for oil in the north of the country, and a major irrigation and hydro-electric project in the Helmand Valley. These projects and other developmental activities required technicians and specialists, who had to be trained inside Afghanistan and abroad. Thus the government's social and economic policies stimulated the development of education in Afghanistan. Nevertheless, the expansion of primary education remained modest. By 1950, there were 368 primary, secondary and vocational schools, and one teacher training school with a total enrolment of 95,300 students.

The post-Second World War period (the 1950s) witnessed political changes in Afghanistan which had an impact on social and economic development including educa-

tion. The granting of independence to the Indian sub-continent by the British government, and the establishment of India and Pakistan in 1948, which did not include a referendum on possible independence for more than seven million Pashtuns, antagonized the nationalist Pashtun people in Afghanistan. The Royal Afghan government which followed a neutral foreign policy, but with closer commercial, cultural and diplomatic ties with western countries, reacted to the new geopolitical situation in the region by seeking closer relations with the USSR. This policy was adopted by a new generation of royal family members and their advisers, and General Mohammed Daoud, a cousin of the King and a former Minister of Defence, was appointed Prime Minister. This political decision had important consequences for the future of Afghanistan. Bilateral cooperation was developed with the USSR in the training and equipment of the Afghan military, and the social and economic sector including education. The new government initiated the five-year economic development plan in 1956, which included a systematic planning of education. Afghanistan received technical and financial assistance from a number of countries, including the USA and the USSR for its social and economic development.

In 1964 a new Constitution was adopted in Afghanistan, which provided some measure of democratic reform within a constitutional monarchy. The government, headed by a former minister, and mainly composed of technocrats, was made responsible to an elected parliament. Social and economic development planning continued. A new education law, and a law for the development of higher education, were enacted. Attention was given to the development of education at all levels. There was an increased public demand for education, expressed through members of the parliament. As a result of social pressure, secondary schools were established in all districts, in some areas without adequate facilities. Provision was made to admit an increasing number of students to the University of Kabul, particularly from the provinces. Primary education and teacher training programmes expanded with bilateral and multilateral assistance. A number of university faculties were developed in cooperation with the USA, France and Germany. A Polytechnic Institute was established with the assistance of the USSR.

In 1973, Mohammed Daoud (who was in retirement) overthrew the monarchy, with the help of leftist parties and officers trained in the USSR, and the Republic of Afghanistan was proclaimed. A seven-year economic and social development plan was launched in 1976. The government's education policy did not change. Special attention was given to the development of technical and vocational education including agricultural education. Despite economic limitations and technical constraints, successive governments in the 1960s and 1970s gave high priority (about ten per cent of the national budget) to the development of education. An important political and social priority was the balanced development of education and the provision of opportunities for students from provincial and rural communities. As a result of the steady development of education, before the coup d'etat of 1978 and the formation of a communist government in Kabul, the student enrolment in schools and other educational institutions in Afghanistan was over one million.

The communist government in Kabul had a political agenda for the transformation of Afghan society. Education was considered an important instrument for promoting the communist ideology and its social structure in Afghanistan. The 'Fundamental Principles' of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan', adopted in 1980, clearly reflected the government's policy on education, which included literacy programmes, the expansion of basic education and the development of vocational training and higher education. The promotion of mother tongues (other than Pashto and Dari) as media of instruction for ethnic minorities was one of the declared priorities. Soviet advisers assisted the government in the

reform of the education system. The education structure and programmes were adapted to be closer to the Soviet education system. The Russian language was introduced in schools with the intention of replacing English as a foreign language. In spite of these measures for the promotion of education, they had little success, as the majority of Afghan people revolted against the communist ideology and resisted foreign domination. As a consequence, the education system, especially outside Kabul and provincial centres, was largely destroyed.

With the formation of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in 1992, the first priority was the establishment of security and the consolidation of government institutions. The government had the enormous task of building a national education system, based on the religious, cultural and historical traditions of Afghan society. Programmes and structures reflecting communist ideology and practices were eliminated. Attention was given to the development of basic education for children and young people in primary schools and community centres. While there was no unified national curriculum, religious education constituted an important part of education throughout the country. In rural areas and conservative parts of the country, equal opportunities for boys and girls were not provided. Since the emergence of the Taliban (Pashtun religious students) in 1995, girls' schools were closed in the areas under their control. As a result of ethnic fighting throughout much of the 1990s, schools and educational institutions in the urban centres have also been damaged.

Cultural Influences

The Afghan values and way of life are based on the Islamic religion and tradition. Religious schools have always been popular in rural communities, which form the bulk of Afghan society. Religious schools were the main centres of learning, which produced the religious and community leaders. With the development of modern education in Afghanistan, the teaching of religion remained a fundamental part of general education. The Arabic language has been taught in schools to facilitate the reading and understanding of the Holy Quran. Efforts were made to reconcile traditional learning with the requirements of modern life. In the 1940s subjects such as science and social studies were added to the curriculum of traditional religious schools, which were the main source of teachers for religious education, and incorporated in the formal education system. The development of education reflected the Islamic tradition with regard to the education of girls, which was historically conservative and oriented towards home and family life.

In the 1980s the communist regime modified the traditional and cultural aspects of the school curriculum, reflecting the new government's political and cultural policy. Many people felt that Afghan culture was seriously threatened. Islam has been the basis of Afghan culture and a major unifying principal among all ethnic groups. Some experts believe that one initial reason for so much hostility against the communist regime in the countryside was the reduction in the subject of religion in the curriculum. The curriculum of primary schools organized by the mujahidin (Islamic resistance parties) for children inside Afghanistan, and for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, included a substantial amount of religious education. The struggle against the communists (jihad) was included in some schools as part of their religious education and training.

An important factor in the development of education for Afghan society was its ethnic diversity. The Afghan people consist of Pashtun (38%), Tajik (25%), Hazara (19%), Uzbek (6%), Turkmen, Nuristani and Baluch ethnic groups. During much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the Pashtun people governed the country. Thus the government's

social, economic and cultural policies were influenced by the dominance of Pashtun ruling families and tribes. In the field of education, since 1945 two national languages (Pashto and Dari) were used as the media of instruction in schools, depending on the region where the majority of the inhabitants spoke Pashto or Dari. The second national language was compulsory in all primary and secondary schools from grade four to twelve. Since the 1930s special attention was given to development of Pashto (the language of the Pashtun people) as one of the two official languages in Afghanistan. The Afghan Constitutions reflected the prominence of the Pashto language and the responsibility of governments for its promotion and development. The other important language in Afghanistan is Dari, which is spoken by the Tajik people and some other ethnic groups. In fact, Dari or ancient Persian, is also spoken in slightly different dialects in other countries in the region including parts of Iran and Tajikistan. Dari is a developed language with a rich, ancient and modern literature, and has been used in the royal courts and governments in Afghanistan.

There were two objectives in the promotion and development of Pashto. Firstly, it is the language of the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan and needed to be developed. Secondly, the governments in Afghanistan felt a national, political and cultural responsibility for the use and development of Pashto, which is also spoken by the Pashtun people in the North West Frontier Province of Pakistan. Other ethnic languages, such as Uzbeki, Turkmeni, Nooristani etc., were not used in education for political (national cohesion) and practical reasons, involving additional resources, the development of textbooks, teacher training etc. The communist regime in Afghanistan (in the1980s) proposed to use, in addition to Pashto and Dari, other ethnic languages (mother tongues) as the media of instruction in some schools. While the educational value of the mother tongue for children is evident, the new language policy did not succeed, as it was politically motivated, and also required significant logistic (textbooks, teacher training, etc.) and financial resources.

The Arabic language has been used extensively in religious schools. It has also been in the school curriculum, with a view to assisting in religious education. The secondary school curriculum provides for the teaching of a foreign language as a compulsory subject. The most widely taught foreign language in Afghan schools has been English, except for the 1980s, when the Russian language was introduced. French and German were taught in several secondary and vocational schools. The University of Kabul had departments for the study of foreign languages and literature (Arabic, English, French and German). In the 1960s and 1970s, foreign language courses for young people and adults were also offered by several institutions in Kabul: The Alliance Francaise (French), the Goethe Institute (German), and the American Language Centre, with the support of US Peace Corps volunteers (English). The teaching of foreign languages played a significant role in the training of Afghan specialists abroad and the development of modern education including the teaching of science and technology in Afghanistan.

In the 1960s several faculties of the University of Kabul (medicine, science, engineering, economics, law and education) were developed in cooperation with the USA, France and Germany. The Kabul Polytechnic Institute was established with the assistance of the USSR. The cooperating countries provided expertise and equipment and trained the Afghan counterparts. These Afghan institutions of higher education applied the standards, curricula and structures of the cooperating countries, adapted to the educational and training objectives and possibilities of Afghanistan. English, French, German and Russian textbooks and literature were used in the corresponding faculties. This cooperation, which was beneficial and enriching for the development of Afghan higher education, had cultural and political implications. The higher education institutions in Afghanistan needed foreign

technical assistance, and were unable to promote and develop a purely national system of higher education. Experience showed that the cultural influence of this policy was very significant, as it contributed to the diffusion of diverse ideologies and the subsequent polarization of Afghan society.

Social and Economic Constraints

Social structures and tradition as well as economic limitations have influenced the pace of educational development in Afghanistan. The staunchly conservative people in the rural areas, where eighty-five per cent of the population lived, were not interested in, and in some areas were opposed to, modern education during the first half of twentieth century. These people desired a traditional education for their children, largely based on Islamic religion and ethics with some skills in literacy and numeracy. Except for mosques, there were no other community institutions for the promotion of education. There were informal tribal and community councils, generally conducted by tribal or religious leaders, to discuss security matters or social and economic (agriculture) affairs and to deal with local governmental authorities. The objective was to continue the traditional structures and way of life and protect tribal and community interests. The situation changed in the 1940s when a few schools were established in provincial centres. Modern schooling was gradually introduced in some parts of Afghanistan, but the pace of development was slower in the south and eastern parts of the country among the Pashtun tribes. In both rural communities and provincial towns, in some parts of the country, there were serious reservations and opposition to the education of girls in the 1940s.

With an estimated population of about eleven million people in Afghanistan in 1950, there were 90,640 boys and only 4,350 girls (five per cent) in primary and secondary schools. The first girls' school was established in Kabul in 1932. Ten years later (1941), the first provincial girls' school was established in Kandahar. In 1940, the female school enrolment in the country was 900. By 1970, there were 92,500 female students in 231 village schools, 166 primary schools, 46 middle schools and 16 lycees throughout Afghanistan. An additional 1,860 female students were enrolled in vocational education, teacher training and higher education institutions. The enrolment of girls constituted fourteen per cent of the school enrolment in the country. Co-education in primary schools was introduced in the late 1950s. Secondary education for girls and boys was organized in separate schools. A Women's Faculty with scientific and literary departments was established at the University of Kabul in 1947.

As part of a modernization process, initiated in 1958 under the Prime Minister Mohammed Daoud, measures were taken to facilitate gradually the participation of women in the social, economic and cultural life of Afghan society. This policy had important consequences for the development of education for girls and women. In 1960, the Women's Faculty was integrated in the corresponding university faculties and co-education at the higher education level was established. In the 1960s several Afghan women were elected to parliament and served in the government. An increasing number of girls and women chose the teaching profession and contributed to the expansion of education in the country. The promotion of girls' education continued through out the 1970s and 1980s. The policy of the mujahideen (in the 1990s) towards the education of girls and women has been conservative and restrictive, not only in relation to the progress of the previous decades but also in comparison with other Muslim countries. This policy and practice have adversely affected the schooling of girls, particularly in rural communities. The mujahidin govern-

ment did not send a delegation to the fourth World Conference on Women, which was held in Beijing in 1995. Since 1995, the Taliban (Pashtun religious students) closed girls' schools in areas under their control.

The most important factor hindering the development of education in Afghanistan was the technical and financial limitation and overall economic situation. Afghanistan is a landlocked country (with an estimated population of 12.3 million in 1960, 20.8 million in 1990, including 4.7 million Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran, 24.5 million in 2000 including 2.6 million refugees), with mainly an agricultural economy and unexploited natural resources. The GDP per capita increased from US $60 in 1960 to US $160 in 1976 (estimated at US $600 in 1995). The gross domestic product in Afghanistan increased from 12.5 billion Afghanis in 1953 to 90.0 billion in 1976. The expenditure on education constituted about ten per cent of the national budget. For purposes of economic assistance, the United Nations placed Afghanistan in the 1960s among the twenty-five least developed countries. Social and economic development planning in Afghanistan began in 1956, and continued until 1978, when the country was plunged into a tragic war and the consequent destruction of its social and economic infrastructure, including two thirds of all schools.

In view of the limitation of resources and different priorities for development, the Afghan governments could not accelerate the development of education. According to the Afghan Constitutions education was the responsibility of the state and it was provided free from primary school to the university. The great majority of the public did not have the means to participate in the cost of education (the annual public contribution to the building of community schools was of the order of two to three per cent of the education budget). The economic development priorities of the country (transport and communication infrastructure, mining, industrial and energy sectors, and the modernization of agriculture) required trained manpower, which necessitated more investment in secondary, vocational and higher education than primary education. Consequently, the development plans for the expansion of primary education were limited because of economic and technical constraints such as teacher training.

International Impact

Following the Second World War and the establishment of the United Nations, the promotion of social, economic and cultural development became a priority of international cooperation. The Declaration of Universal Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948, recognized education as a human right. UNESCO was created in 1946 and Afghanistan joined it one year later. Ever since UNESCO has promoted educational development world-wide, particularly in the developing countries. It has also adopted a Convention Against Discrimination in Education, based on nationality, race, colour, religion or sex, as well as other international instruments for the promotion of basic education, technical and vocational education and higher education. Afghan officials and specialists participated in UNESCO conferences and technical meetings dealing with the policy, planning and development of education. The international and regional meetings facilitated the exchange of information and experiences and the formulation of appropriate policies, norms and methods for the development of education. The intellectual and promotional work of UNESCO has influenced educational policy and development in Afghanistan.

In the 1960s the United Nations Development Programme and the World Bank recognized the relation between investment in education and economic growth. Thus the

international organizations provided increased technical and financial assistance for the development of education. The first UNESCO mission was invited to study Afghan education in 1949. Over the years a number of educational projects, particularly in primary and basic education, teacher training and educational planning, were developed in Afghanistan with the technical assistance of UNESCO, and other international organizations such as UNDP and UNICEF. The focus of UNESCO in Afghanistan has been mainly in the area of primary education, including the education of girls, with a view to the promotion of the right to education and the achievement of universal compulsory education. Neutral Afghanistan appreciated the increasing role of the United Nations system in developmental activities including education

A very important contribution of UNESCO to the development of education in Afghanistan has been in the area of teacher education. In 1964, new structures for teacher training, including an Academy for the Training of Teacher Educators were established in Kabul. The Academy was the first post-graduate institution of teacher education in Afghanistan, which trained teacher educators for the primary teacher training colleges which were being established throughout the country. In the 1990s, UNESCO assisted in the establishment of a number of basic education centres in rural areas with the support of the communities concerned. A new concept of basic education, decentralized and community-based, which offered flexible and functional programmes for young people and adults, was introduced in Afghanistan. The non-governmental organizations (mainly from Europe and the USA) played a significant role in promoting and supporting education in Afghanistan during the last two decades of conflict, particularly in rural communities.

In the context of bilateral economic and cultural cooperation, the Afghan education system received assistance from many countries in the form of advisory services, technical and financial support and fellowships. In terms of the impact on orientation and the development of modern education in Afghanistan, cooperation with Turkey, France, Germany, the USA and the USSR was significant. Turkey had a historical role in the initial development of medical education in Afghanistan. France and Germany were involved from the 1920s in secondary education (especially in two lycees in Kabul), the teaching of French and German, and the development of higher education. Germany has also assisted in the development of mechanical and crafts schools and an institute of industrial management. The USA cooperated with the Ministry of Education and the University of Kabul between 1954 and 1978 in curriculum development, the teaching of English, teacher education, technical, agricultural and engineering education. The USSR assisted from the late 1960s in the development of a Polytechnic and a number of Technicums. Egypt cooperated with the Faculty of Islamic Studies, and religious schools.

In addition to bilateral support for the development of higher education in Afghanistan, during the period 1950 - 1980 many hundreds of Afghan students were trained as specialists at universities in Europe, the USA, the USSR and other countries such as Egypt and India. These specialists contributed to the social and economic development of Afghanistan. A number of them held positions of responsibility in the Ministry of Education and higher education institutions. They played a significant role in the development of modern education. There is no doubt that bilateral and multilateral cooperation in education was an opportunity and a necessity, as well as a cultural challenge, for the development of a national education system in Afghanistan.

Expansion of Education

A UNESCO conference on Primary Education (Karachi, 1960), taking into account the economic conditions of member states and population growth, recommended that the developing countries in Asia should be able to achieve seven years of universal compulsory primary education by 1980. This plan was revised in 1962 in a conference held in Tokyo, since several Asian countries, including Afghanistan, could not hope to reach the targets of the Karachi Plan before 1990. In 1964 a team of UNESCO specialists studied the long term projection of educational development in Afghanistan, and concluded that by 1980, the enrolment ratio for six years of primary education (seven to twelve years age) would be between a minimum of thirty-seven per cent and a maximum of fifty-seven per cent, and that universal compulsory primary education could not be achieved before the end of the century. The actual enrolment ratio for primary education attained in 1980 was thirty-six per cent. The war and destruction of the last two decades of the century was a major setback for education in Afghanistan. The enrolment ratio for primary education in 2000 is estimated to be thirty per cent.

Adult illiteracy has been a major problem in Afghan society. The teaching of literacy has a history going back to 1906 when an Afghan educator (Said Ahmad Kandahari) developed a method and six books including a teacher's guide. In 1950 a publication entitled 'An Adult Literacy Course', based on the Laubach and Yunus methods, as well as a periodical for new literates were published. The Ministry of Education, the Department of Rural Development and the Afghan Women's Organization as well as the Ministry of Defence were conducting literacy courses. In the 1960s new structures were created with national responsibility for the eradication of illiteracy, and pilot projects were carried out in cooperation with UNESCO and FAO. In spite of these efforts, the literacy rate did not change significantly for two reasons: (a) the technical and financial resources required for an effective adult literacy campaign were not available; (b) the number of illiterates was increasing due to population growth and the lack of schooling for about seventy-five per cent of the compulsory school age population. According to UNESCO statistics in 1967 the rate of illiteracy for men was eighty-five per cent and for women ninety per cent. In the 1980s, the communist regime in Kabul made adult literacy a high priority with the establishment of a National Commission, headed by the Prime Minister, and increased resources. However, due to the political nature of the literacy campaign and fighting in the country, the objectives could not be attained. In 1985 according to UNDP sources the average literacy rate was estimated at twenty-one per cent. Adult literacy at the end of the decade (2000) is estimated between twenty and thirty per cent.

Despite the constraints, there was progress in the expansion of education. Between 1950 and 1978, the student enrolment in different types and levels of education increased from 96,000 to 1,037,800, a tenfold increase. Female enrolment during the same period increased from less than 5,000 to 167,120, representing a thirty-threefold increase. There were 6,000 students in eighteen technical and vocational schools; 5,400 students in sixteen teacher training institutions; and 16,000 students enrolled in higher education. This rate of increase was comparable to the development of education in some other countries in the Asian region. There were also efforts to improve the quality of education. A modern European curriculum, adapted to Afghan society, was applied in secondary schools. The education system was diversified, and a number of innovative projects, involving international cooperation in the field of teacher education, technical and vocational education and higher education, were initiated.

The growth of general education in Afghanistan between 1940 and 2000 is shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. The development of girls' education and comparison between female/male enrolments are presented in Table 3 and Figure 2. An important consideration in the planning process during the 1960s and the 1970s was the geographically balanced expansion of education, as much of the earlier educational development had taken place in Kabul and a few centres. In 1960, the general education enrolment in the city of Kabul represented twenty-one per cent of the total enrolment in the country. This proportion was reduced to fourteen per cent in 1970, with a more rapid expansion of education in the provinces. The distribution of education by region and the language of instruction (Pashto or Dari) is presented in Tables 2 and 2A. There was also an effort to expand vocational and teacher education in the provincial centres. A significant portion of the students at the university, teacher training and technical and vocational schools in Kabul was admitted from the provinces.

Reflecting on the development of education in Afghanistan during the twentieth century, the period 1956 to 1978 was significant in terms of the expansion of education for a number of reasons : a) peace and stability in and outside Afghanistan; b) increased public awareness for the value of modern education, resulting in a greater demand for education; c) the existence of a national policy for social and economic development planning; d) a favourable international climate for bilateral and multilateral cooperation in social and economic development projects including the field of education; e) the support of the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies such as UNESCO in promoting and catalysing the world-wide development of education, as a human right; f) the role of a number of dedicated Afghan educators and specialists, who were in positions of responsibility and contributed to the promotion and development of education in the country.

Two Decades of Conflict

In the 1980s Afghan society suffered great human and material losses as well as major demographic modification. In a UNDP document (1993) the devastation of Afghan society was described as follows: "War has killed at least a million people, maimed and disabled many more, created an army of orphans and widows, turned half the population into internally displaced persons and refugees, including six million outside the country". The continuation of ethnic conflict and fighting in the 1990s resulted in more destruction and the displacement of the population. At the end of the century (2000) there were still 2.6 million Afghan refugees in Iran and Pakistan, and several hundred thousand Afghans in Europe, the USA and other parts of the world. During the last two decades of the twentieth century much of the education infrastructure was destroyed, and the country did not have a unified curriculum or a national education system. The majority of educated Afghans, including university professors, doctors, engineers and other specialists left the country in the 1980s. In the year 2000 about thirty per cent of Afghan children were enrolled in primary education. The education of girls decreased during the 1990s. In the absence of a national education system, the international and Afghan non-governmental organizations contributed to the provision of basic education for children, particularly in rural areas with the support and participation of local communities.

The most profound impact of the tragic war in Afghanistan has been on Afghan children and youth and on the social, cultural and political evolution of the country. The children who were born during the last twenty years in Afghanistan, and in the refugee camps of Pakistan and Iran, and who were lucky to survive, faced much suffering and hardship.

The great majority of these children and young people did not have proper food and shelter or any schooling. Some of the children, who were able to have a basic education, went to a variety of schools run by different Afghan and foreign authorities and organizations. The curricula of these schools have been diverse and limited, without unifying national and cultural objectives for Afghan society. The schools run by the mujahidin inside Afghanistan and in the refugee camps emphasized traditional and religious education, as a reaction against communist ideology. Furthermore, a significant number of Afghan adolescents attended religious schools (madrassa) in Pakistan. During the 1980s most of the children and young people inside Afghanistan and outside have been raised in the context of diverse ideologies and a culture of war. The ethnic fighting of the 1990s added a new dimension to the division of Afghan society. The greatest challenge for the future will be how to develop a national education policy and programmes that will be modern and cohesive for Afghan society, and promote a culture of peace.

Table 1

The Growth of General Education in Afghanistan (Student Enrolments: 1940-1999)

Year	*Primary Education*				*Secondary Education*				*Total*
	male	*female*	*total*	*(ER)*	*male*	*female*	*total*	*(ER)*	
1940			57,000				1,800		58,800
1950	87,444	3,970	91,414		2,746	283	3,029		94,443
1955	107,100	8,900	116,000		4,900	1,000	5,900		121,900
1960	155,719	19,939	175,658	(9)	13,588	3,059	16,647	(1)	192,305
1965	303,739	54,298	358,037	(16)	27,532	6,450	33,982	(2)	392,019
1970	464,542	76,143	540,685	(21)	92,823	14,736	107,609	(5)	648,294
1975	668,773	115,795	784,568	(20)	77,683	9,854	87,537	(6)	872,105
1980	917,413	198,560	1,115,993	(34)	98,345	26,143	124,488	(10)	1,240,481
1985	401,472	179,027	580,499	(20)	71,784	33,248	105,032	(9)	685,531
1990	410,846	211,667	622,513				182,340	(9)	804,853
1993	609,330	74,670	684,000		196,650	85,690	282,340		966,340
1999	811,495	64,110	875,605	(29)					

ER: Enrolment Ratio = actual enrolment divided by the estimated population of the age group for that level of education

Figure 1

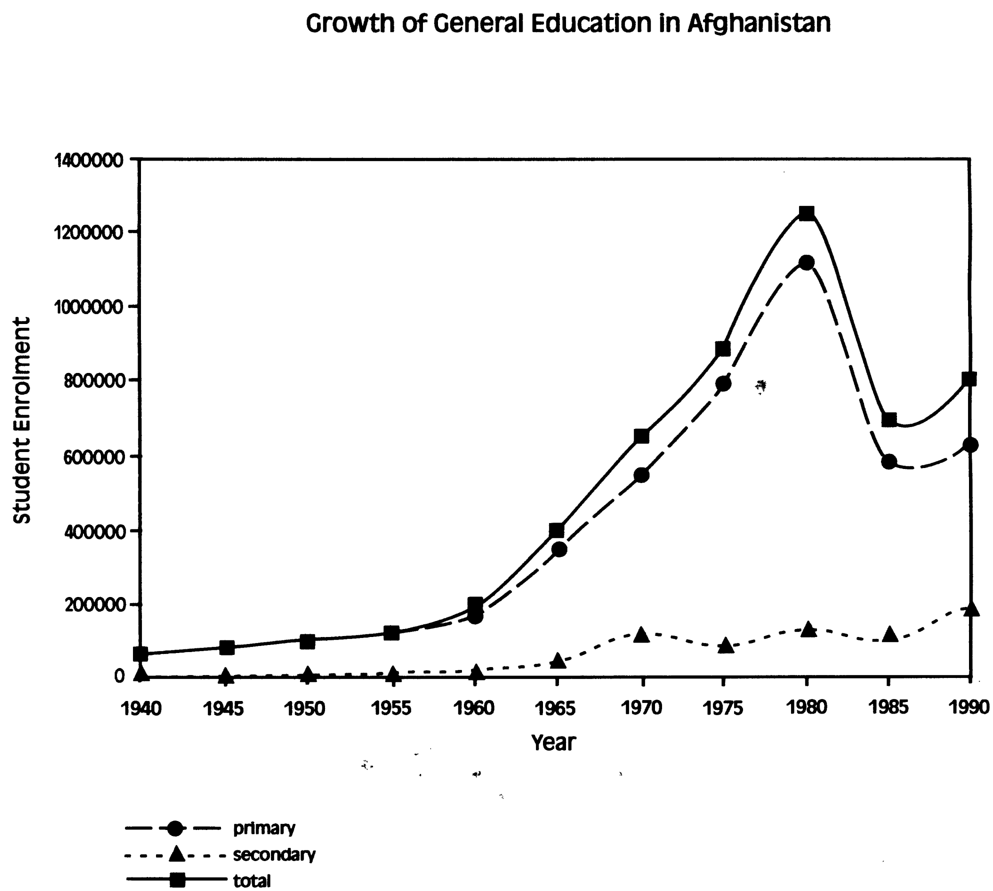

Growth of General Education in Afghanistan
Student Enrolment
1400000
1200000
1000000
800000
600000
400000
200000
0
1940
1945
1950
1955
1960
1965
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
Year
primary
secondary
total

Table 2

General Education by Region in Afghanistan
1970

	Primary (1-6)			Middle (7-9)		Secondary (10-12)		
Province	*Pupils*	*F (%)*	*Age (%)*	*No. **	*Pupils*	*No.* 1950*	*No.* 1960*	*No.* 1970*
North								
Balkh	23,622	17.6	41.0	15	2,877	2	2	6
Samangan	8,182	10.8	20.2	9	856			3
Jawzjan	16,192	11.0	23.4	12	1,062			3
Faryab	24,570	24.4	37.1	15	2,064			6
Kunduz	16,772	12.7	17.8	16	1,889	1	1	5
Baghlan	19,658	10.3	12.4	16	2,088	1	1	5
Takhar	13,519	6.3	13.0	11	1,082			3
Badakhshan	21,373	8.6	27.6	11	1,267			2
West								
Heart	26,835	18.7	22.5	18	3,235	1	3	5
Badghis	5,967	9.6	6.8	5	294			1
Farah	11,599	11.7	23.0	13	1,344			2
Ghor	10,637	7.7	12.9	7	540			2
Centre								
Kabul	90,592	14.6	48.9	39	23,631	6	11	20
Parwan	18,891	11.5	6.0	21	3,677	1	1	7
Kapisa	15,460	16.1	21.9	12	2,633			4
Bamyan	9,334	9.7	10.7	9	504			3
Logar	13,250	2.9	19.1	11	2,693			3
Wardak	11,557	1.0	12.2	14	2,047			3
East								
Nangarhar	33,576	7.0	19.4	22	7,469		2	8
Laghman	14,968	6.8	25.1	11	3,128	1	1	3
Kunar	17,178	4.3	18.7	15	2,612			5
Paktia	30,240	1.7	20.6	30	5,353	1	1	8
South								
Ghazni	22,494	8.6	10.7	20	2,519		1	7
Kandahar	19,482	11.9	16.5	21	3,445	3	3	8
Helmand	18,101	4.6	22.7	17	1,928		1	5
Zabul	5,106	4.9	4.6	5	275			2
Oruzgan	13,056	3.2	8.9	10	646			2
Nimroz	8,541	14.3	29.0	4	541			2
Total	**540,685**			**409**	**81,699**	**17**	**28**	**133**

Note: F (%) = per cent of girls in primary education. No.* = number of schools
Age (%) = per cent of primary school age children (7-12) in school.
In 1970, there were 46 middle schools for girls and 363 schools for boys.
In 1970, there were 16 secondary schools (lycees) for girls and 117 for boys.

Table 2A

Primary Education by Province and Language of Instruction
(Student Enrolment: 1967)

Province	*Pashto-Medium* M	*Pashto-Medium* F	*Dari-Medium* M	*Dari-Medium* F	*Total* M	*Total* F
North						
Balkh	2,031	–	15,742	3,815	17,773	3,815
Samangan	159	–	5,972	747	6,131	747
Jawzjan	2,238	235	10,402	1,333	12,640	1,568
Faryab	2,824	–	10,864	4,431	13,688	4,431
Kunduz	–	–	10,595	1,547	10,595	1,547
Baghlan	3,100	–	8,415	1,326	11,515	1,326
Takhar	–	–	11,514	778	11,514	778
Badakhshan	–	–	12,638	1,198	12,638	1,198
West						
Herat	–	–	18,182	4,207	18,182	4,207
Badghis	1,111	120	3,106	328	4,217	448
Farah	4,585	–	4,834	1,218	9,419	1,218
Ghor	–	–	7,020	953	7,020	953
Centre						
Kabul	8,739	1,088	47,229	21,722	55,967	22,810
Parwan	633	–	11,536	1,594	12,166	1,594
Kapisa	1,419	–	9,653	2,131	11,072	2,139
Bamyan	–	–	5,400	585	5,400	585
Logar	7,227	125	813	116	8,040	241
Wardak	7,603	49	1,338	49	8,941	98
East						
Nangarhar	26,281	1,989	–	–	26,281	1,989
Laghman	11,158	825	–	–	11,158	825
Kunar	9,739	443	–	–	9,739	443
Paktia	25,439	466	–	–	25,439	466
South						
Ghazni	7,896	390	5,552	878	13,448	1,268
Kandahar	15,731	2,142	–	–	15,731	2,142
Helmand	16,126	794	–	–	16,126	794
Zabul	3,556	186	–	–	3,556	186
Oruzgan	6,207	255	2,189	30	8,396	285
Nimroz	178	–	4,476	780	4,654	780
Other*	3,696	296	6,378	3,898	10,074	4,194
Total	167,676	9,403	213,847	53,312	381,523	62,715

Note: Other* refers to schools run by the Department of Rural Development. In 1967 there were a total of 444,237 pupils in primary education (39.9 per cent in Pashto-medium and 60.1 per cent in Dari); female education: Pashto-medium 5.3 per cent, Dari-medium 20.0 per cent and national average 14.1 per cent. (Source: Ministry of Education, 1967)

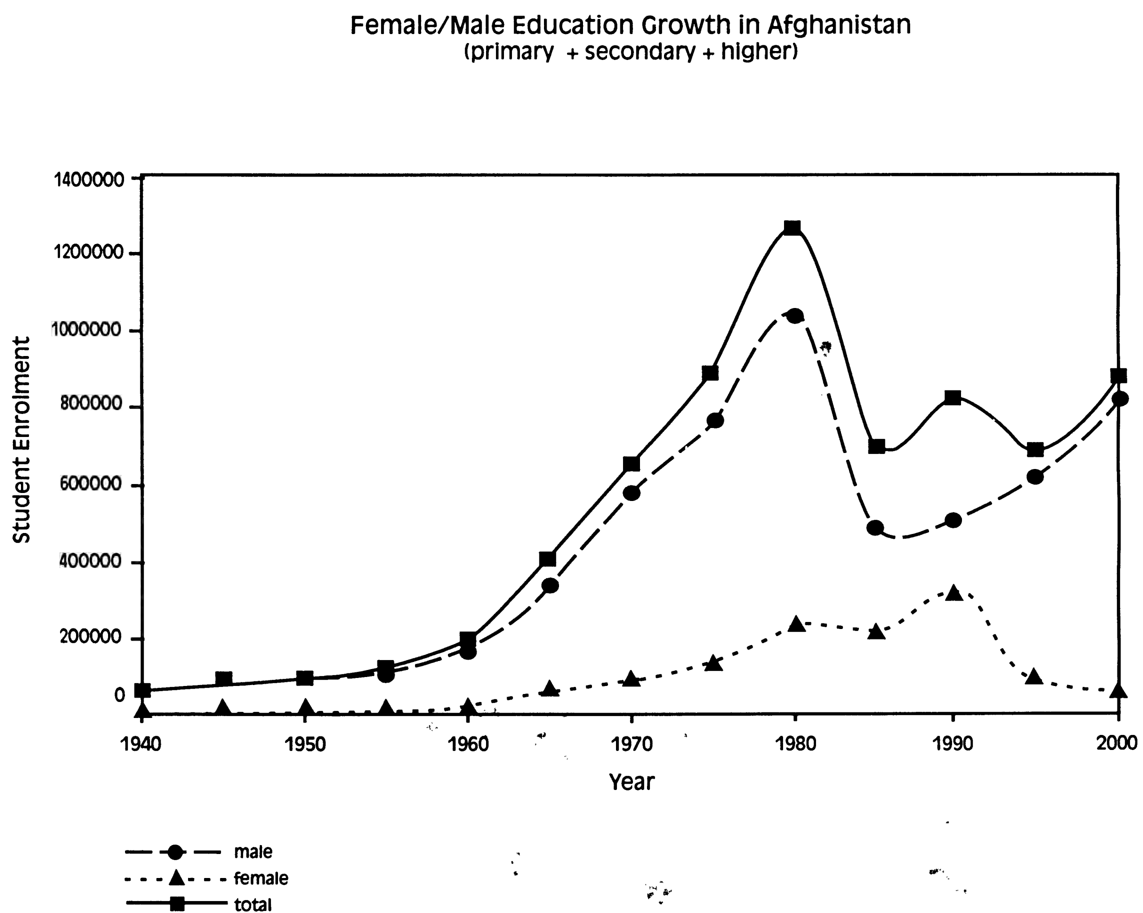
Table 3

The Growth of Female/Male Education in Afghanistan
Primary+Secondary+Higher Education
(Student Enrolment: 1940 - 2000)

Year	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*	*Female (%)*
1940	900	59,100	60,000	1.5
1945	2,000	75,000	78,000	2.6
1950	4,350	90,640	94,990	4.6
1955	9,990	111,100	121,090	8.3
1960	23,155	170,845	194,000	11.9
1965	61,394	334,074	395,468	15.5
1970	92,030	564,090	656,120	14.0
1975	127,345	757,030	884,375	14.4
1980	229,690	1,028,730	1,258,425	18.2
1985	215,390	492,440	707,830	30.4
1990	311,220	517,970	829,190	37.5
1993	160,360	805,970	966,330	16.6
1999	64,110*	811,495*	875,605*	7.3

Note: The data for 1999 refers to enrolment in primary education only, as reliable data for other levels of education is not available.

Figure 2


Female/Male Education Growth in Afghanistan
(primary + secondary + higher)
1400000
1200000
1000000
800000
600000
400000
200000
0
Student Enrolment
1940
1950
1960
1970
1980
1990
2000
Year
male
female
total



The Development of Education

Afghanistan, being a cradle and cross-road of ancient civilizations, has witnessed many flourishing eras of learning and civilization in its history. Throughout history, the inhabitants of the land of Afghans contributed to the enrichment of the culture of the region. During the Islamic period, many centres and circles of learning were established in cities such as Balkh, Herat and Ghazni, which produced scholars in philosophy, literature and science to serve the people of the region and beyond. The medical treatise, written by Ibn-Sina Balkhi (Avicenna) in the tenth century, was used in European universities until the end of nineteenth century. Abu Rayhan Biruni (tenth century), Hakim Sanai (eleventh century), Khwaja Abdullah Ansari and Maulana Jalaludin Roumi (thirteenth century), and Kushal Khan Khattak and Rahman Baba (seventeenth century), were Afghan poets and philosophers who enriched human thought and civilization. Said Jamaludin Afghani, a political philosopher of the nineteenth century who had many disciples, travelled in Asia, Africa and Europe to promote national independence and Islamic solidarity, and to explain the relation between Islam, science and progress.

Traditional education for children and young people at different levels was provided at home, in the mosques, in informal schools linked to mosques, in religious centres (madrassa) and in scholar's circles. These institutions were supported by parents, local communities, religious and tribal leaders and private sources. The madrassa provided general knowledge and theological studies for young men, and prepared religious and community guides and teachers. Some opportunities for studies in writing, poetry and literature, history, science and traditional medicine, etc., were available through private tutoring and in small informal circles The mosque and related schools served as basic community centres in which pupils could study the Holy Qoran, learn about Islamic values and ethics, and acquire literacy and numeracy. Traditional education also helped to prepare young people (mainly boys) for work through informal apprenticeship in local arts and crafts, farming and commerce. This was the pattern of education and training prevailing in Afghanistan at the beginning of the twentieth century. With the development of modern education in Afghanistan, traditional education structures and modalities of learning were modified and gradually replaced by new educational institutions.

This chapter considers the development of modern education in Afghanistan. It traces the beginning of modern education, followed by detailed information and analysis of educational development in the country during the post-Second World War period (1948-1978), until the emergence of a communist regime in Kabul (the educational situation of the communist period, during the 1980s, is discussed in the subsequent chapter). This chapter covers educational policy and administration, the organization and structure

of education, primary education, secondary education, technical and vocational education, teacher-training programmes, and higher education.

The Beginning of Modern Education

The beginning of modern education (western style) in the country may be considered to correspond to the establishment of the first secondary school (Habibia) in Kabul in 1903, with the aim of training personnel for the civil service. Afghan and foreign teachers (Indian Muslims) were recruited for this school. In the early years of the 1900s several modern primary schools and a teacher training institution were established. In 1909 the government set up a Board of Education to approve the school curriculum and textbooks, and supervise education, including traditional educational institutions. Following the independence of Afghanistan in 1919, during the reign of King Amanullah, social and political conditions became favourable for initiating the development of modern education in Afghanistan. The government gave high priority to the development of education and a Minister of Education was appointed for the first time in 1922. During the 1920s, a number of primary and secondary schools (Istiqlal, Amania, Ghazi) including a secondary school for girls and an adult education centre for women as well as several vocational schools (agriculture, art and crafts, and public administration) were established in Kabul. For the first time, a group of young Afghan boys and girls was sent to study abroad. The establishment of diplomatic and cultural relations with foreign countries contributed to the development of modern education. Through bilateral cooperation with countries such as Turkey, France and Germany, foreign teachers and expertise and scholarships for Afghan students were made available to Afghanistan.

Education during the First Half of the 20th Century

In January 1929 there was a set-back in the development of education due to the departure of King Amanullah, followed by nine months of civil strife and anarchy (under Habibullah Kalakani) during which the modern schools were closed. Later that year Nader Shah became king of Afghanistan, schools were reopened and attention was given to the development of education. In 1930 there were 1,590 students and 53 teachers in thirteen primary and secondary schools. In 1931 a new Constitution was promulgated in which (Articles 20 and 22) reference was made to compulsory primary education for Afghan children with the government responsible for the control and supervision of all educational institutions except those carrying on traditional education. After the assassination of Nader Shah in 1933, and the beginning of the reign of Zaher Shah and the royal family, there was a limited expansion of education, and special attention was given to the development of Pashto as one of the two main national languages of Afghanistan.

During the 1930s, a number of secondary schools were established in the provinces, and several traditional religious schools were modernized and incorporated into the formal education structure. A secondary school for girls was established in Kabul. Two secondary vocational schools (mechanical and agriculture) and a medical school for the training of assistant doctors and pharmacists were established in Kabul. In 1932, the nucleus of a Faculty of Medicine (the first modern institution of higher education) was set up in Kabul with the assistance of Turkish medical advisers and several Afghan doctors who were trained abroad. The Faculty of Medicine graduated the first group of eight intern doctors

and twelve pharmacists in 1937. With a view to social and economic development of Afghanistan, and in the absence of facilities for higher education in the country, in 1938, the government sent a group of about twenty-five secondary school graduates to universities in France, Germany and the USA in different fields.

During the period of the Second World War (1939-1944), in which Afghanistan maintained its neutrality, the pace of development of education in Afghanistan slowed down owing to economic and technical constraints. Most of the foreign experts and teachers left the country. The needed machinery, equipment and teaching materials for schools and training institutions could not be imported. In 1950, there were 95,300 students (including 4,350 girls) and some 3,000 teachers in 368 schools, which consisted of 308 primary schools, twenty-five middle schools, sixteen secondary schools, four vocational schools, one teacher training school and seven formal religious schools (madrassa). There were 456 students including forty female students in five institutions of higher education. The enrolment of children in primary education in 1950 represented six per cent of the corresponding age group (six to twelve years) in an estimated population of eleven million people.

Educational Development in Post-Second World War

After 1945, parallel with the introduction of some political reform and the beginning of a short-lived democratic movement, and the return of a number of trained Afghan specialists from abroad, several important measures were taken in favour of educational development in Afghanistan. In 1947, the Ministry of Education was reorganized to ensure the development of different levels and types of general and vocational education. The central services of the ministry for the development of textbooks, the provision of materials and school construction were strengthened. In the context of a centralized education system, attention was given to the development of provincial offices of education with an increased delegation of authority and resources to promote the expansion of education throughout the country.

In order to develop higher education, the University of Kabul was established in 1946. The University incorporated several faculties which had been established earlier and were already functioning. These were the Faculty of Medicine (established in 1932), the Faculty of Law, the Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Letters. The primary purpose of the Faculties of Science and Letters was the training of teachers for secondary schools. In addition, between 1948 and 1955, twenty-five top graduates of secondary schools were given government scholarships every year to study in European and American universities in different fields such as science, engineering, economics, law, etc. Upon their return, many of the trained Afghan specialists assumed responsibilities in the University of Kabul and other social and economic development projects.

In the post-Second World War period, Afghanistan embarked on a more systematic development of education, in which international cooperation played a significant role. In addition to Afghanistan's traditional cooperation in the field of education with countries such as France and Germany, which was further developed especially at the university level, other countries including the USA and the USSR participated in Afghan education projects. Furthermore, with the creation of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, new opportunities for development cooperation came about, which not only made new expertise and resources available, but also were politically more acceptable to Afghanistan. Hence, the first UNESCO mission was invited by the government in 1949 to survey the state of education in the country. This was followed by other contacts that led to significant multilateral cooperation in education projects later on.

The systematic planning of education in Afghanistan began in 1956. In the early 1950s, efforts to expand education and improve its quality were initiated. In 1954, under contract with the Unites States Agency for International Development (USAID), a team of specialists from Columbia University, New York came to assist in the qualitative improvement of teacher education. The first five-year educational development plan (1956-1961) focused on primary education. In view of the country's need for trained manpower, the second plan (1962-1967) placed more emphasis on secondary, technical and higher education. The third five-year development plan (1968-1973), envisaged a balanced expansion of education at all levels with special attention to the qualitative improvement of teacher education. While primary education expanded according to the plan, the growth in secondary education was faster, due to public demand, especially in the provinces. In 1973, following a coup d'etat, Afghanistan was proclaimed a Republic and Mohammad Daoud (a former Prime Minister and a cousin of King Zaher Shah) became the Head of State. The Republic launched the first seven-year economic and social development plan (1976-1983) to accelerate economic growth through industrial development and the modernization of agriculture. The development of human resources including technical and vocational education was a priority in the seven-year plan, which was interrupted in 1978 due to a coup d'etat and a change of regime.

The economic development plans were financed from internal resources and external technical assistance funds and loans. In the first five-year development plan (1956-1961), 6.5 per cent of the national budget was devoted to social services including education, in which the share of education was 958 million afghanis (Afs.). During the second development plan (1962-1967), the share of the national budget for social services was increased to 11.2 per cent. However, the resources for capital investment in education (for buildings and equipment) fell short of the expected budget. The resources for education development in the second plan amounted to 1,759 million Afs. The third five year development plan (1968-1973), allocated 16.7 per cent of the total budget to social services in which the share of education was estimated to be over 3,000 million Afs. The first seven-year economic and social development plan (1976-1983), which was not completed due to the revolution of 1978 and its consequences, envisaged a total investment of 10.5 billion Afs. in social services, which included 3.5 billion Afs. for education.

It should be pointed out that there were a number of factors hindering the development of education in Afghanistan. Like many other developing countries, it had basically an agricultural economy and about eighty-five per cent of the population lived in rural areas; with an estimated population of 12.3 million in 1960, the GDP per capita was US$60. Hence, there were technical and financial constraints for the expansion of education. There were also cultural and linguistic factors affecting educational development. Textbooks and educational materials had to be prepared in the two national languages (Pashto and Dari). In some parts of the country, people were happy with the traditional Islamic education for their children, especially for girls. The growth of education during the three five-year development plans, covering the period 1956-1972, is shown in the following Table.

Student Enrolment

	Plan-I (1956-1961)	Plan-II (1962-1967)	Plan-III (1968-1972)	
	1955	*1960*	*1967*	*1972*
Primary	111,650	213,100	444,240	540,700
Secondary	5,730	14,100	54,400	107,600
Vocational	1,950	2,500	5,700	5,200
Teacher Ed.	1,000	3,900	5,600	4,170
Higher Ed.	760	1,700	4,320	6,600
Total	121,090	235,300	514,260	664,270

Education Policy and Administration

The concept of modern public education in Afghanistan emerged in the 1920s, following independence. In 1931 a Constitution was promulgated in which (Articles 20 and 22) primary education was made compulsory for all Afghan children, and the government was responsible for the control and supervision of all schools and educational institutions. A new Constitution was promulgated in 1948, in which primary education was made compulsory for every boy and girl, and the state reserved the right and responsibility for the administration of all education and training from the primary school to the university.

In 1964, a certain democratic reform was introduced in the political system of Afghanistan in the context of a constitutional monarchy. A new Constitution was promulgated, which provided for the separation of the legislative (composed of an elected House and Senate), executive and judicial branches of the government. Article 35 of the Constitution referred to education as the right of every Afghan citizen, which should be provided free by the government. In accordance with the new Constitution, the following Education Law was prepared which provided the basis for education policy during the 1960s and 1970s.

Fundamental Objectives

Article I - According to Article 35 of the Constitution, education is the right of every Afghan citizen. Education is free and the government is responsible for the supervision and guidance of educational activities. It is the aim of the government to reach a stage in which suitable educational facilities will be available for all individuals according to their capacity in institutions of primary education, literacy centres and institutions of vocational, secondary and higher education as well as centres for research and cultural activities.

Article II - The basic objectives of all educational and cultural activities by the government are the development of the physical, mental and spiritual talents of the individual, and the strengthening of the feelings of patriotism, humanism and loyalty to the Crown among all Afghan subjects, as well as the instilling of a feeling of individual and social responsibility for the progress of the country, the maintenance of world peace, and the furtherance of international cooperation.

Article III - Provision of equal educational opportunities without consideration of sex, race, religion and social or economic status.

Article IV - Primary education shall be compulsory for all boys and girls between the ages of seven and fourteen.

Article V - Provision of facilities for secondary and vocational education is the duty and prerogative of the government alone. These facilities as far as the country's possibilities permit, shall be made available to a majority of youth in accordance with their talents.

Article VI - Facilities for higher education shall be made available by the government to all those who show suitable personal and academic qualities.

Article VII - Facilities for free basic education shall be made available as far as possible to illiterate adults and young people above school age.

Article VIII - The basic principles of Islam shall be taught in all primary and secondary schools. Non-Muslim pupils are exempt from Islamic religious teaching on the application of their parents or guardians.

Article IX - Outside the fields of higher, secondary and vocational education, which are the government's prerogative, private Afghan individuals also have the right to establish separate literacy or other special courses in accordance with provisions of the law.

Article X - The medium of instruction in regions where the majority of the inhabitants are Pashto speakers is Pashto, while it is Dari in the regions where the majority of the inhabitants speak Dari.

Article XI - The government may permit foreign nationals to establish special schools in accordance with the provisions of the law.

Education Policy of the Republic

Following the establishment of the Republic of Afghanistan (1973), a new Constitution was promulgated in 1976, whose fundamental objective concerning education (Article 10) was stated as follows: provision of public compulsory primary education; development of free general secondary, vocational and higher education for the training of scientific and technical personnel, with the aim of serving the people. Except for the "loyalty to the Crown", the Republic of Afghanistan followed the provisions of the Education Law, which was prepared in 1964, until the take-over of the government by the communist regime in 1978, and the formation of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA). The DRA education policy had the objective of contributing to the transformation of Afghan society by introducing significant reform in the education system, which will be discussed in a separate chapter of this document. This policy continued until 1992 and the establishment of the Islamic State of Afghanistan.

Administration of Education

In view of the political tradition, ethnic diversity and economic situation in Afghanistan, a centralized system of government was adopted to ensure unity, security, efficiency and economic development. The same principle was applied to the administration of education. Thus the administration of modern education in Afghanistan was centralized. The Ministry of Education has been responsible for policy formulation, the organization and supervision of education. The administration of education in the provinces was carried out, according to national curricula, standards and regulations, by Directors of Education who were responsible to the ministry of education. The position of the Minister of Education in

Afghanistan has always been important and politically sensitive. The Ministers of Education from 1922 to the late 1940s were prominent personalities close to the Crown, who were advised by selected Afghan scholars and administrators in the management and development of education.

In the period from the 1950s to the 1970s, the Ministers of Education and many of the key senior officials were Afghan specialists in social or natural sciences or education, who had completed their secondary education in Kabul and were trained in western universities. These leaders in education adopted, within the context of national values and culture, a European style of education with regard to curricula, examinations and school regulations (in fact, French and German teachers were involved in two secondary schools in Kabul from the early 1920s). Within the national policy guidelines on education (as established by the government) and the approved budget, the Minister of Education was responsible for the administration of education. For financial and budgetary control, a Deputy Minister for administration assisted the Minister, and ensured that the operation conformed to the government financial and management regulations. To a certain extent, the administration of education reflected the vision, competence and personal style of the minister and key officials.

In view of the relatively small size of the education system in the 1920s and 1930s, the structure and personnel of the ministry of education was limited. The first important reorganization of the ministry of education took place in 1947. Separate departments for primary education, secondary education and vocational education, including teacher training, were established. A unit for school construction was set up. The Department of Compilation (textbook development) was strengthened, and in 1951 the Education Press (printing facilities) was established. In 1964 a Department for Educational Planning was organized. In 1966 teacher training became a separate department. In the 1960s, the central services for physical education and sport, school health programmes, administration and the employment of personnel were strengthened. In the mid-1960s the organization of the Ministry of Education was fully developed and remained practically unchanged until 1978 (Figure 3). The structure of the education system as established in the 1940s is shown in Figure 4.

The Minister of Education had two Deputy Ministers (one for academic affairs and the other for administration) as well as a number of advisers who were senior specialists in social or natural sciences, arts and literature, etc. A senior staff meeting, composed of department heads and advisers, chaired by the first Deputy Minister responsible for academic affairs, ensured the management and coordination of activities within the ministry. The departments of primary, secondary, vocational and teacher education established the curricula and standards. The instructional departments in the Ministry of Education controlled national examinations leading to a certificate. The Department of Compilation developed textbooks for primary and secondary schools. Specialized textbooks and teaching materials for vocational and teacher training institutions were prepared by the relevant instructional departments of the ministry and the Institute of Education. The department of inspection was responsible for the administrative inspection of schools in Kabul and the provinces. The provincial Directors of Education were responsible for the application of national curricula and the standards and management of education in the provinces. Educational supervision was carried out by provincial supervisors in coordination with the relevant departments in the Ministry of Education. The school year was organized according to the climate of the region. Generally the schools in the eastern and southern provinces were closed during the summer, whereas schools in other regions, including Kabul, with severe winters had a three-month holiday in the months of December to February.

The administration of higher education was carried out by the respective institutions themselves, under the supervision of the President of the University. The University President was directly responsible to the Minister of Education. The institutions of higher education (faculties) enjoyed academic freedom, and were responsible for their curricula, standards and examinations. In 1968 the government enacted a law for the administration and development of universities. According to the provision of this law, a Board of Trustees was established to "maintain, regulate and coordinate higher education designed to meet the social, economic and cultural needs of the country as determined by the Government". The Board was composed of the Minister of Education (as chairman), Ministers of Finance and Planning and the President of the University, as well as four additional members, prominent scholars with experience in the academic and administrative affairs of the university. The University President was responsible to the Board of Trustees. The University Academic Senate (chaired by the President of the University) was responsible for "the academic and educational affairs of the university and is empowered to reach decisions in related areas".

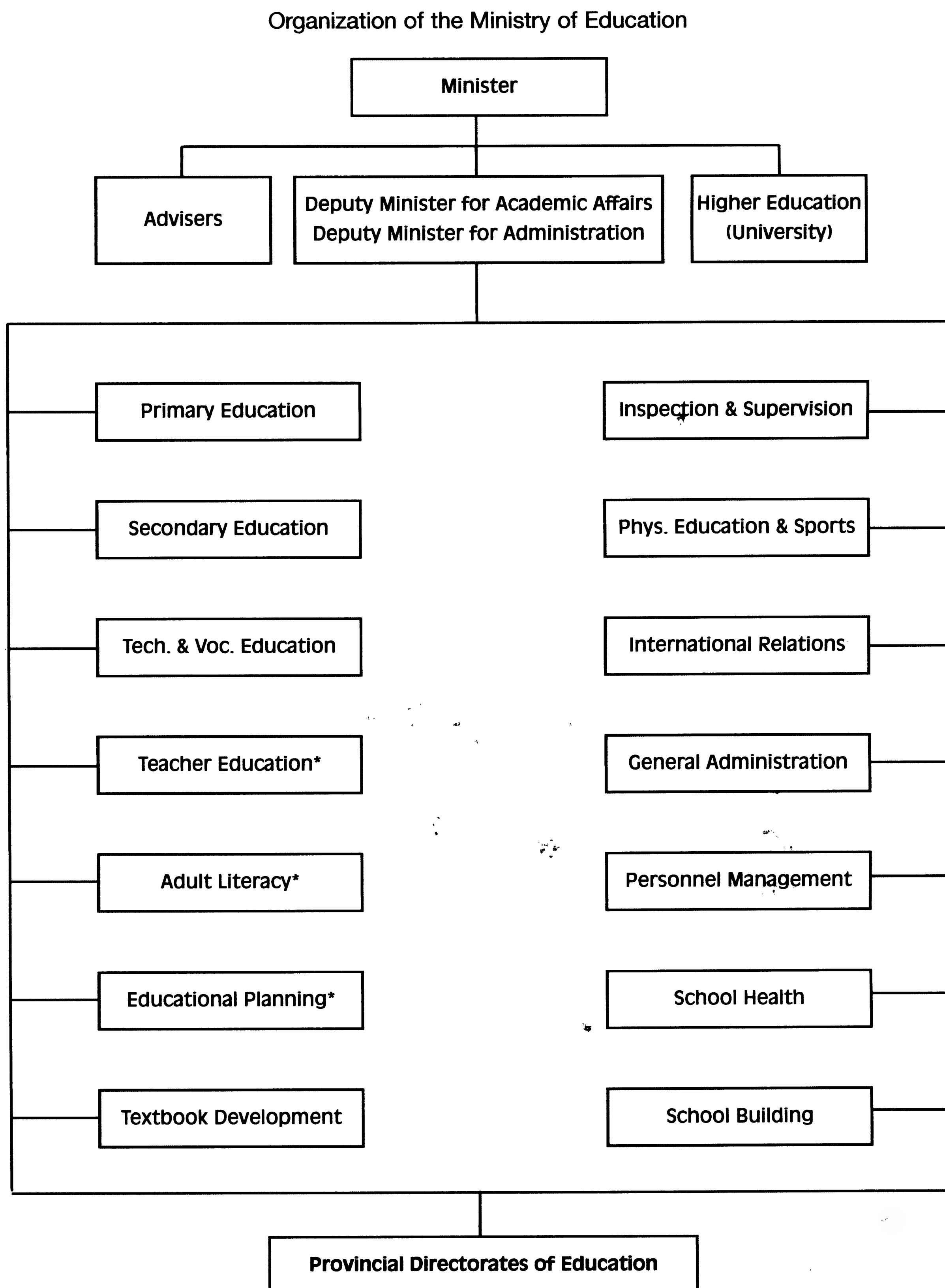
With the expansion of education in the 1950s and 1960s, increased attention was given to the development of human resources for education such as teachers, school administrators and supervisors. Efforts were made to expand teacher education and develop training programmes for education personnel. The Institute of Education organized in-service training programmes for educational administrators, including provincial Directors of Education. An annual seminar was organized for the exchange of information and consultation, in which all Provincial Directors of education and senior officials of the ministry participated. Between 1956 and 1965, a number of experienced male and female teachers and supervisors received post-graduate training at Columbia University, New York. In addition, a number of foreign experts and teachers, mainly from the United States, France, Germany and the United Nations provided advisory and technical services to the education system. These measures contributed to a certain degree to the improvement of educational administration in Afghanistan. Nevertheless the education and professional qualifications of the teaching and administrative staff of the Ministry of Education remained below the desired standards. In 1970 there were 18,060 teachers in the ministry schools, of whom forty-eight per cent had secondary, post-secondary or university education and professional training. The number of administrative and clerical staff in the education system was 4,300, of whom only thirteen per cent had secondary education or higher.

The financing of education has been a major constraint for the qualitative and quantitative development of education in Afghanistan. According to the law, education from primary school to the university was free, and was financed from government sources, which included some international aid. Public participation in educational expenditure was very limited. In addition to human resources, the provision of school buildings and other facilities, such as textbooks and laboratory equipment, were a continuing preoccupation of the Ministry of Education. The government press as well as the Ministry of Education Press printed school textbooks. In the 1960s in cooperation with the Franklin Publishing Company (New York), the technical capacity of the education press was increased (in 1970 the annual capacity of the education press was five million textbooks of standard size). The laboratory and workshop equipment had to be imported, and was not adequate for the rapidly expanding secondary education. In 1970, on the recommendation of the First Deputy Minister of Education, a Science Centre was established which, together with the audio-visual Centre, produced some basic laboratory equipment and teaching aids for schools, and conducted training.

The Ministry of Education did not have the resources or the technical capacity to construct new school buildings to meet the expanding needs of the education system. Most schools were operating in double shifts. In 1970, from a total of 3,046 primary and village schools about twenty-five per cent did not have adequate school buildings and were operating in mosques or rented private houses. At the secondary level, thirty-two per cent of a total of 541 schools did not have properly constructed buildings. It should be mentioned that 971 schools (village, primary and secondary), representing forty-three percent of all school buildings, were constructed with voluntary contributions and the participation of the communities concerned. The problem of school construction was particularly acute in the provinces, due to the inadequacy of funds (budget) and the technical limitations of the public works offices responsible for the construction of schools in the provinces. The building of physical facilities for vocational and teacher training institutions in Kabul and the provinces, which had relatively higher priority for funding, including international aid, was carried out under the supervision of the construction department of the Ministry of Education.

Figure 3

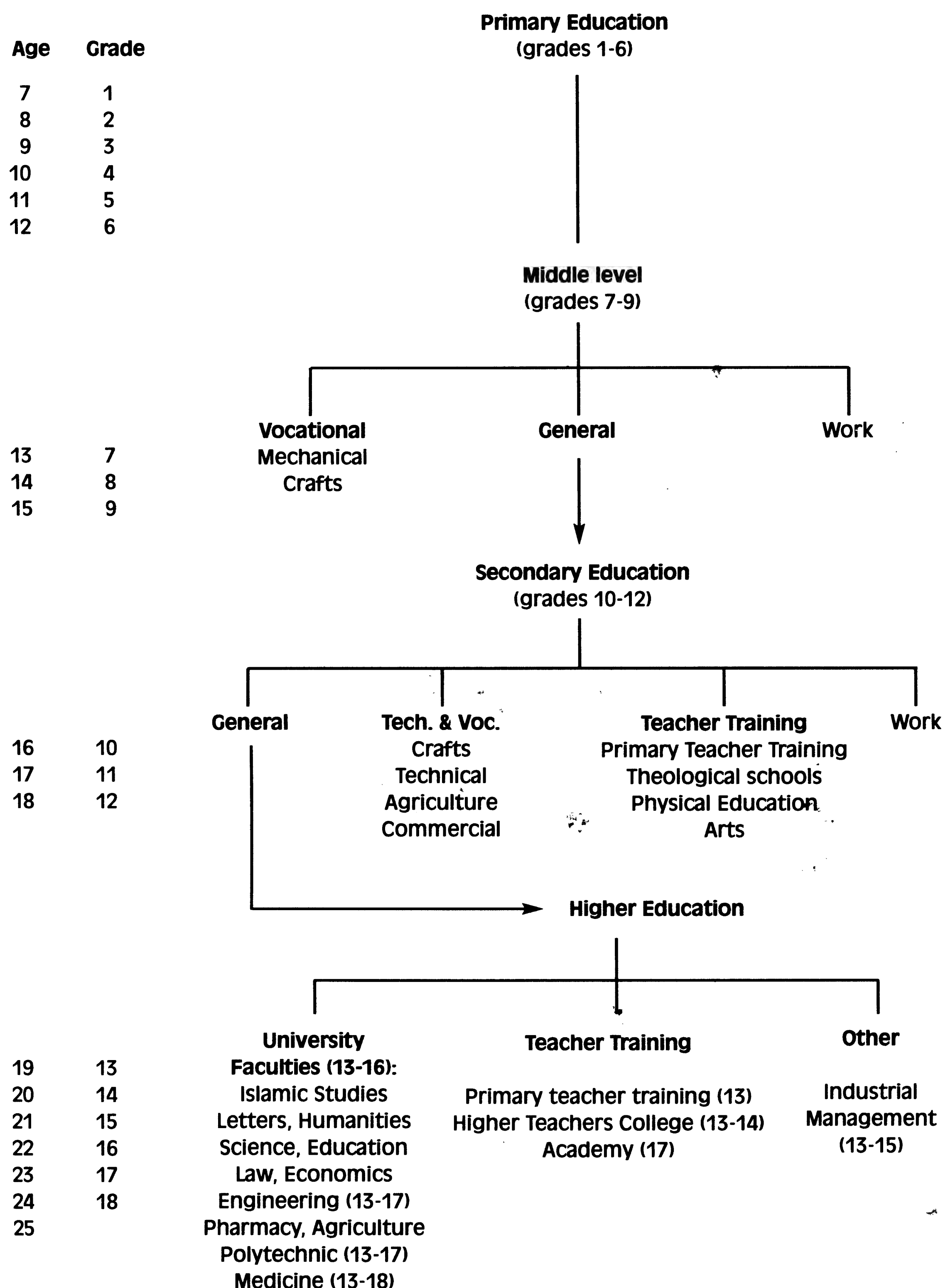
Organization of the Ministry of Education



Organization: 1947-1978
* Departments added in 1960s

Figure 4

Structure of Education in Afghanistan



Note: General education Structure: 1945-1975 (6+3+3); 1975-1978 (8+4); 1979-1985 (4+4+2); 1986-1990 (5+4+2); 1991-2000 (6+3+3).

Primary Education

Modern primary education in Afghanistan did not develop until the 1950s and the beginning of five-year education development plans. According to the studies carried out in the 1960s, it was projected that Afghanistan might achieve universal primary education by the end of the century. However, due to technical and financial constraints the expected rate of growth in primary education could not be attained. In 1975 there were 789,000 boys and girls (thirty per cent) in primary education, which represented twenty-five per cent of the compulsory school age population (7-14 years). The growth of primary education is presented in Table 4 and Figure 5. The rate of adult illiteracy in 1975 was estimated to be about eighty-eight per cent. Thus, in spite of the efforts of the Ministry of Education and other authorities, literacy and basic education continued to be a major problem in the country. While the average annual rate of growth in primary school enrolment in Afghanistan in 1960s and 1970s was thirteen per cent which was comparable to, and in some cases even better, than some other Asian countries, the development of education in achieving universal compulsory primary education has been one of the lowest in the region. There were a number of reasons for this situation: a) there was no significant growth in the development of modern education in Afghanistan, for political and cultural reasons, during the first half of the century; as a consequence, there was a small base of formal education; b) due to under-development and the general economic situation, the technical and financial resources of the government were inadequate for a more rapid expansion of education in the country. The objectives, organization, structure and curriculum of primary education, as prescribed in the 1950s, and which largely remained valid until 1975, are presented in the following sections.

Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of primary education are the development of children's talents and the instilling of desirable skills, values and habits in order to achieve the following objectives:

- Achievement of literacy and the essential general knowledge for living.
- Maintenance of the physical, mental and spiritual health of the pupil.
- Development of a desirable social personality.
- Acquisition of ability for useful and effective participation in the life of the family, the school, the community and the nation.
- Development of the pupil in order to be adherent to Islamic principles.
- Development of the pupil in order to be faithful to the constitutional monarchy and other positive Afghan traditions and national and universal aims.

Organization

The structure of education in Afghanistan consisted of four years of primary, four years of lower secondary or middle level, and four years of upper secondary education in the 1930s and early 1940s. In 1944 a structure of 6+3+3 was adopted which remained unchanged until the reform of education in 1975, in which a structure of eight years of primary education and four years of secondary education was adopted. Primary education was organized in the following types of schools:

a) Regular primary schools with grades one to six were established in urban and densely populated rural areas. Class teachers taught the first three grades, while subject teachers

carried out the teaching in the upper grades. From the 1960s there was co-education in some primary schools. Due to the limitation of facilities, most primary schools operated in two shifts. The average class size was about forty. There was an examination at the end of each year (in 1974 automatic promotion was experimented within the first three grades). At the end of the sixth year there was an examination controlled by Directors of Education, leading to a certificate of primary education.

b) Village schools (grades one to three) were first established in 1949; these schools were organized generally in the mosques in thinly populated areas, which were about five kilometres away from the nearest primary school. The availability of a minimum of ten children was required to begin the first class. The curriculum of the village school was community and work-oriented and consisted of religion, language and arithmetic. Three textbooks were prepared, one for each grade which were supplemented by texts for religious studies; the multi-grade class was taught by one teacher who was a local traditional scholar or imam (Islamic clergyman) in a mosque. Some of the village schools were upgraded to basic primary schools. With the addition of the fourth grade in a village school, a second teacher was appointed. Children completing village schools, which were not upgraded to a primary school, could enter a primary school (if available) or join practical work activities on the farm or in a local craft.

c) The traditional type of private tuition and mosque schools continued to remain as one form of informal educational institution in some areas of the country where formal schooling was not available. The emphasis in private tuition has been on religious studies, literacy and numeracy. Pupils from these informal schools were accepted, on passing an examination, in an appropriate level of basic primary school, or in one of the formal religious schools.

Curriculum

The department of primary education prescribed the curriculum of primary schools. The syllabus and textbooks were uniform throughout the country, except for the language of instruction which was Pashto in the regions where the majority of inhabitants were Pashto speaking, and Dari in Dari-speaking areas. Schools were allowed to adapt the content of certain subjects such as general knowledge and science to the local and community situation. While the broad framework of the primary education curriculum remained unchanged in the 1960s and 1970s, some modification and innovations were introduced in the content and teaching methods. Several new textbooks and teachers' guides were prepared by the Institute of Education for the teaching of languages (Pashto and Dari), social studies, general science and health education. The primary school subjects with a weekly time allocation (fifty minute teaching periods) as described in the official curriculum and applied in the 1960s are given in Table 5.

Table 4

The Growth of Primary Education in Afghanistan (1940 - 1999)

Year	*Schools*	*Teachers*	*Pupils*			*ER (%)*
			male	*female*	*total*	
1940	300	1,750	56,100	900	57,000	
1951	325	3,0 00	87,444	3,970	91,414	
1956	734	3,600	107,100	8,900	116,000	
1960	1,113	5,054	155,719	19,939	175,658	9
1965	1,878	7,124	303,739	54,298	358,037	16
!970	3,020	13,116	464,542	76,143	540,685	21
1975	3,371	18,553	668,773	115,795	784,568	25
1980	3,824	35,364	917,413	198,560	1,115,993	36
1985	792	15,581	401,472	179,027	580,449	
1990		16,500	414,332	214,561	628,893	
1993	2,202	23,248	609,329	74,667	683,996	
1999	3,084	26,385	811,495	64,110	875,605	29

ER: Enrolment Ratio = actual enrolment divided by the estimated population of primary school age group (7-12)

Figure 5

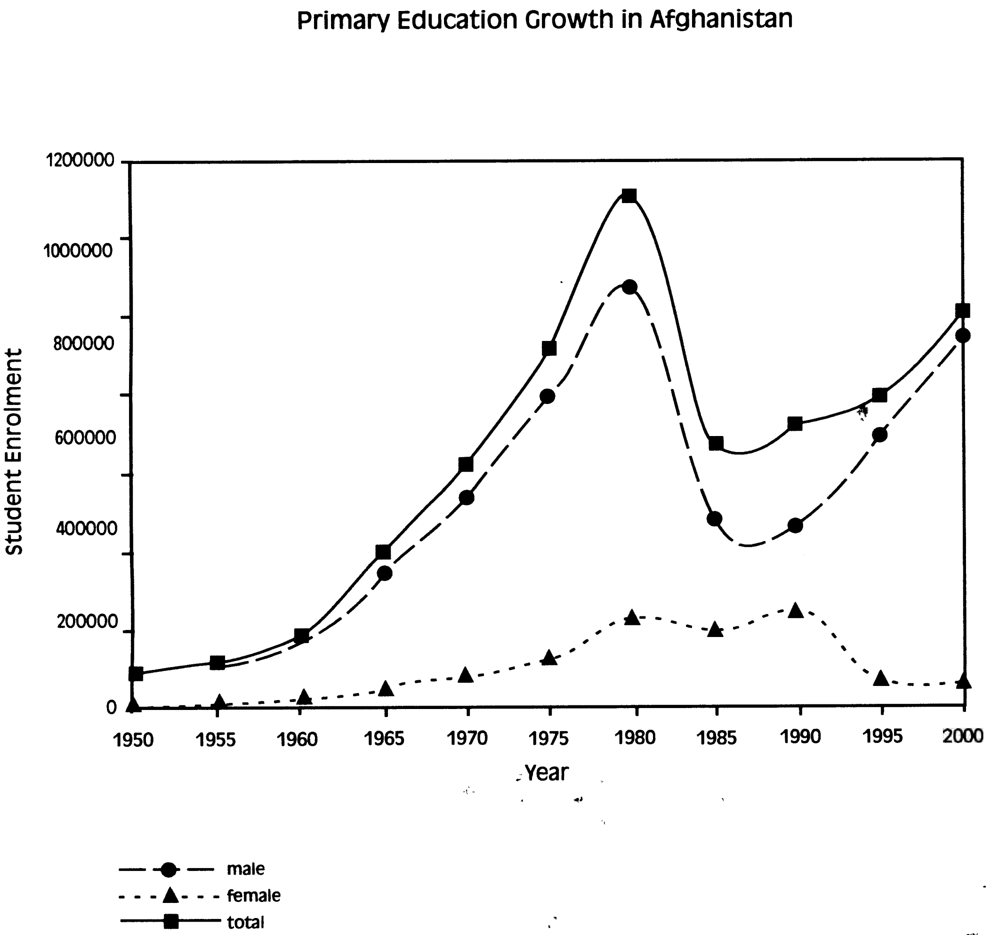

Primary Education Growth in Afghanistan
1200000
1000000
800000
600000
400000
200000
0
Student Enrolment
1950
1955
1960
1965
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
1995
2000
Year
male
female
total

Table 5

The Curriculum of Primary Education
(Periods per Week)

Subjects	*Grades*					
	I	*II*	*III*	*IV*	*V*	*VI*
Holy Quran /Theology	4	4	4	5	5	5
Pashto or Dari (1)	12	12	12	5	4	5
Dari or Pashto (2)				5	5	5
Arithmetic & Geometry	4	4	4	4	5	5
History				2	2	2
Geography				2	2	2
Science				2	2	2
Art	3	3	3	2	2	2
Calligraphy	4	4	4	2	2	1
Physical Education	1	1	1	1	1	1
Total	28	28	28	30	30	30

Note: This curriculum was applied from 1955 to 1975. Primary education was extended to eight years in 1975 but modified again in the 1980s.
(1) Pashto in Pashto-speaking areas, and Dari in Dari-speaking areas
(2) Dari in Pashto-speaking areas, and Pashto in Dari-speaking areas

General Secondary Education

Before 1950, there were seventeen secondary schools (lycees) in Afghanistan: six in Kabul including two secondary schools for girls (Malalai and Zerghoona); three in Kandahar including one lycee for girls (Zarghoona Anna); two in Balkh including one lycee for girls (Sultana Razia); one each in Herat, Laghman, Paktia, Parwan, Baghlan and Kunduz. In 1950 the student enrolment in secondary schools was about 3,000. In 1970 there were 133 secondary schools with a total enrolment of 25,910 male and female students in grades ten to twelve. There was a relatively significant expansion of secondary education in the 1960s. The annual rate of growth in secondary education during the 1960s and 1970s was over twenty per cent. The growth of secondary education is presented in Table 6 and Figure 6. In order to ensure a balanced development of secondary education, a number of boarding schools were established. There were thirteen boarding schools for general education with a total enrolment of 5,800 students (nine secondary and four primary) including two secondary schools in Kabul for Afghan and tribal Pashtun students (Rahman Baba and Khoshal Khan), and two primary schools for nomads. In view of the high cost and certain management problems of the boarding schools, the government decided to phase out some of the secondary schools, beginning in 1971, and use the funds for the establishment of regular day schools in the provinces.

In the context of a new Constitution and a more democratic form of government in the 1960s, there was considerable public demand (through their elected representatives in the parliament) for the expansion of education, particularly at the secondary level, which was the basis for further education and training in the university. The public demand led to the faster development of secondary education. With the rapid expansion of secondary education, the quality of education with regard to the availability of trained teachers, especially in science and mathematics, laboratory equipment and facilities, particularly in the provinces, was affected. The Ministry of Education took a number of short and long-term measures for training science teachers and supervisors, including the establishment of a National Science Centre. The secondary schools in Kabul and other main cities had better teaching staff and physical facilities. Thus the quality of secondary education in the country remained uneven, and the institutions of higher education had to take the situation into account in their admission policies. The objectives, organization, structure and curriculum of general secondary education, as prescribed in the ministry documents and applied during the 1960s and 1970s are presented in the following section.

Aims and Objectives

The principle aims of secondary education are stated in the following objectives of pupil's growth:

- Maintenance of the physical, mental and spiritual health of the pupil.
- Development of a desirable social personality.
- Acquisition of ability for useful and effective participation in the life of the family, the school, the community and the nation.
- Acquisition of basic knowledge in sciences and continuation of education at a higher level.
- Development of the pupil in Islamic principles.
- Development of the pupil to be faithful to constitutional monarchy.
- Inculcation of respect for national and universal aims.

Organization

Secondary schools were organized in two cycles of grades seven to nine (middle school) and grades ten to twelve (lycee) in separate schools for boys and girls. The reform of education in 1975 had modified the structure of education to basic education (grades one to eight) and secondary education (grades nine to twelve). The admission of students to the middle school and lycee was based on the successful completion of the lower cycle of education and passing the entrance examination of the school concerned. At the end of the middle school and Lycee, national examinations were organized and the successful candidates were awarded appropriate certificates (middle school certificate or baccalaureat). The size of secondary schools varied and most of them had enrolments of under one thousand students; there were a few schools with enrolments of two thousand or more (mainly in the Kabul area). The average class size was thirty-five to forty students per class. Two lycees in Kabul, Istiqlal and Nejat, received technical assistance (for physical facilities, equipment, and the teaching of a foreign language, French or German, science and mathematics) from France and Germany respectively. While these schools followed the official ministry curriculum, they were able to experiment with new methods and organization of teaching.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the middle schools offered a general education in languages, social studies, science and mathematics, and preparation for subsequent entry into the second cycle of general secondary education (lycee) or vocational and teacher training schools. While the curriculum of middle schools was uniform throughout the country, there was some experimentation in selected schools in the organization of teaching certain subjects such as geography and history as social studies, and chemistry, physics and biology as general science. The curriculum prescribed simple laboratory facilities for demonstration in the middle schools. However, not all schools were equipped with laboratory facilities for science teaching. A foreign language (mainly English) was prescribed from the beginning of the middle school, and textbooks were developed by the Institute of Education, but there was a shortage of trained teachers.

The curriculum of lycees (grades ten to twelve) offered more courses in languages, social studies, science and mathematics with the aim of preparing students for higher education. There were no electives in the curriculum, except for the provision of two sections in selected lycees, one concentrating on natural sciences and the other on social sciences and literature, during the last year (grade twelve). Laboratory facilities were generally provided for demonstration and group work. However, not all secondary schools had the necessary facilities and trained teachers. In large secondary schools, departments were organized to coordinate and supervise the teaching of science, social studies, languages, etc. There was no significant difference in the curriculum of boys and girls in secondary education, except for the provision of one to two periods per week of home economics in girls schools. The subjects and time allocation as described in the official curriculum and applied in the 1960s and 1970s are given in Tables 7 and 8.

Textbooks for all subjects (languages, social studies, science and mathematics) in secondary education were developed in Pashto and Dari. Most lycees had libraries for teachers and students. The size of school libraries varied from one thousand to several thousand volumes of reference books in Pashto, Dari, Arabic and European languages. A teacher was generally designated as a part-time librarian. There was no study period (or library work)

scheduled in the curriculum of secondary schools and the library was used after school hours. Examinations were an important part of the school system to measure the achievement of pupils. In addition to teachers, principals and other education authorities were involved in the supervision of secondary school examinations. The Ministry of Education controlled the final examination of the lycee (grade twelve), leading to the baccalaureat.

Extra-curricular activities in secondary schools consisted mainly of sports, literary meetings, dramatics and music. There was also the possibility of participating in the boys' and girls' scouting activities and the junior Red Crescent societies. Pupils celebrated important events and anniversaries such as Teachers' Day, the United Nations' day, Red Crescent week, and religious and national days by holding conferences, performing plays, and publishing articles in the school journal. Students themselves undertook the organization and often the financing of such activities.

Table 6

The Growth of General Secondary Education in Afghanistan (1940-1994)

Year	*Schools*	*(Lycees)*	*Teachers*	*Students*			*ER (%)*
				male	*female*	*total*	
1940	12	(8)	50			1,800	
1950	41	(17)	143	2,800	340	3,140	
1955	43		250	4,900	1,000	5,900	
1960	52	(28)	650	13,590	3,060	16,650	
1965	200		1,197	27,530	6,450	33,980	2
1970	542	(133)	4,248	92,850	14,750	107,600	5
1975			3,800	77,680	9,870	87,550	7
1980			6,270	98,320	26,130	124,450	10
1985			5,715	71,790	33,240	105,030	8
1990			7,356			182,340	9
1994				196,650	85,690	282,340	

ER = Enrolment Ratio.
Note: The enrolment in 1975 is lower than 1970 due to a change in the structure of secondary education (grades 7 and 8 not included).

Figure 6

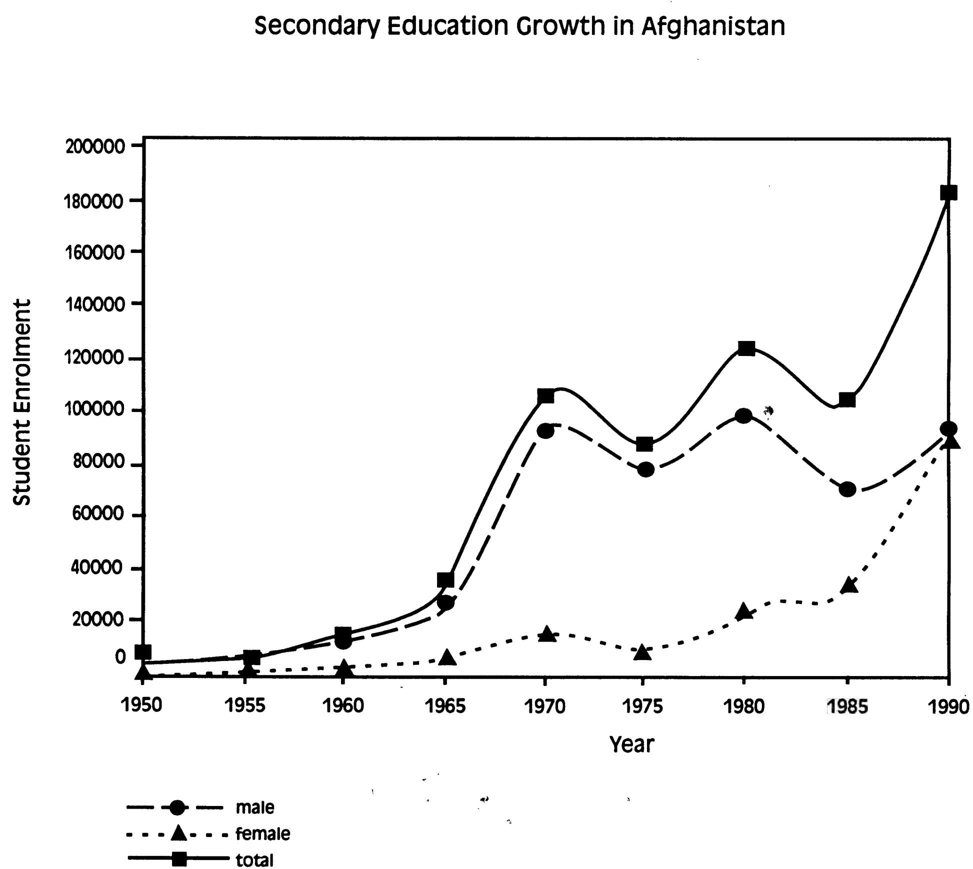

Secondary Education Growth in Afghanistan
Student Enrolment
200000
180000
160000
140000
120000
100000
80000
60000
40000
20000
0
1950
1955
1960
1965
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
Year
male
female
total

Table 7

The Curriculum of Secondary Education
Middle School (Periods per Week)

Subjects	*Grades*		
	VII	*VIII*	*IX*
Holy Quran & Theology	3	3	3
Pashto	3	3	3
Dari	3	3	3
Arabic	2	2	2
Foreign Language	6	6	6
Mathematics	5	5	5
History	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Economics	1	1	1
Chemistry	2	2	2
Physics	2	2	2
Biology	2	2	2
Art	1	1	1
Physical Education	1	1	1
Total	**35**	**35**	**35**

Note: This curriculum was applied from 1955 to 1975. The structure of general education was modified in 1975 to (8+4).

Table 8

The Curriculum of Secondary Education
LYCEE (Periods per Week)

Subjects	*Grades*		
	X	*XI*	*XII*
Theology	2	2	2
Pashto (1)	3 / 4	3 / 4	3
Dari (2)	3 / 4	3 / 4	3
Foreign Language	6	6	4
Algebra	3	2	2
Geometry	4	4	3
Trigonometry		1	2
Chemistry	3	3	3
Physics	3	3	3
Biology	3	3	
Geology	3		
History	2	2	2
Geography	2	2	2
Logic (Philosophy)		3	
Physical Education	1	1	1
Total	**36**	**36**	**36**

Note: This curriculum was applied from 1960 to 1978.
(1) 3 p/w in Pashto-speaking regions, and 4 p/w in Dari-speaking areas
3 p/w in Dari-speaking regions, and 4 p/w in Pashto-speaking areas

Technical and Vocational Education

Modern vocational schools in Afghanistan were developed after the Second World War. The first technical, agricultural and commercial schools were established in Kabul in the following order: Crafts School (1923), Mechanical School (1937), Agricultural School (1944), Commercial School (1948), Technicians School (1951), Belqis Vocational School for girls (1959) Public Administration School (1959) and Hotel Management School (1963). The first vocational schools in the provinces were established in the context of the five-year education development plan (1956-1961). These were two mechanical schools in Kandahar and Khost and a craft school in Farah. In the 1960s and 1970s, technical and vocational education was developed more rapidly to train the skilled workers and technicians required for economic development. In 1950 there were 1880 students in the Ministry of Education vocational schools. In 1975, the enrolment in vocational schools was 6,000 students including 650 girls. Most of the vocational schools made provision for day students as well as residential facilities for boarding students, who were selected from graduates of those schools which were located a certain distance away from the vocational school. The growth of vocational education (1940-1990) is presented in Table 9 and Figure 8.

In addition to technical and vocational education and training programmes of the Ministry of Education, a number of other ministries and agencies were involved in the training of their technical personnel through specialized schools, or in-service and apprenticeship type training schemes. These authorities included the Ministries of Mines and Industry, Communications, Public Works, Public Health, Agriculture, the Civil Aviation Authority, the Helmand Valley Authority, etc. The Afghan Women's Institute offered vocational training for adult women. According to the law, the Ministry of Education was responsible for the approval of the programme and the certification of all vocational schools in the country. Technical and vocational education in Afghanistan was developed with external bilateral and multilateral technical assistance, particularly from Germany, the USA, the USSR and the United Nations.

The development of technical and vocational education was high priority in five-year economic development plans (1956-1976). In a study prepared in 1965 on the state of technical personnel in Afghanistan by Saif Samady, President of the Department of Technical and Vocational Education, it was reported that all vocational schools and centres in the country had a capacity of 5,180 places for the training of skilled workers and technicians. The University of Kabul had 1,430 places for the training of engineers. The study raised a number of issues requiring attention and policy decisions, which were affecting the planning and development of technical and vocational training in the country. These included the following:

(a) Identification of the needs and priorities for technical training and the systematic forecasting of manpower requirements;
(b) Setting up a mechanism for policy coordination at the national level with the agencies and industries concerned;
(c) Development of community training centres, in cooperation with relevant economic projects and institutions, for the promotion of handicrafts and local vocations;
(d) Promotion of vocational education in terms of salary and job security as well as support to private activities and entrepreneurial work;
(e) Coordination of resources and technical facilities and setting national standards and profiles for manpower training.

The first seven year economic and social development plan (1976-1983), which was not

completed due to the change of regime in 1978, proposed a significant development of technical and vocational education. The general objectives of the plan were "to accelerate economic growth through industrial development and the modernization of agriculture; development of human resources; improvement of the economic infrastructure by the development of a proper communication system, irrigation and power system". The demand for technical personnel during the plan was estimated to be 9,340 technicians with secondary level qualifications and 5,900 engineers and specialists with higher education qualifications. The plan proposed an increase in the enrolment in vocational schools (agriculture, mechanical, technology and crafts) from 3,300 to 13,500 students by 1983. Furthermore, according to the reform of education in 1975, it was proposed to introduce training in handicrafts and local vocations in the seventh and eighth grades of all primary schools, which were upgraded from six years to eight years of study. It was also proposed to divert gradually up to fifty per cent of secondary education students to technical and vocational streams and courses.

There were a number of factors affecting the quality and efficiency of vocational training in Afghanistan. There was no significant industrial base in the country to provide the appropriate environment and structure for the development of vocational training. The economy was based on agriculture, which was developed in traditional ways with little modern technology. Vocational training schools did not have the desired social prestige, and attracted those students who could not continue their studies in secondary education. Furthermore, technical and vocational training programmes were generally terminal, and only a small portion of the graduates who had completed, in addition to technical and vocational training, the equivalent of general secondary education, could continue to higher education in their specialized fields. The initial capital and operating costs of vocational training were high because most of the materials and equipment had to be imported; foreign experts and teachers were needed, who were provided mainly under bilateral technical assistance programmes. While trained Afghans replaced many of the foreign teachers, the machinery and equipment and materials continued to be imported. There was little participation in the training or operating costs of the schools by industry or other employers of the graduates. The use of different systems and expertise, and the lack of teaching materials in the national languages were affecting the standards and efficiency of technical and vocational training programme

Organization

Technical and vocational education in the Ministry of Education schools was organized at the lower secondary (grades seven to nine) and upper secondary level (grades ten to twelve) for the training of skilled workers and technicians respectively. With the expansion of general secondary education and the availability of a significant number of middle school graduates, in 1970 vocational schools were upgraded to admit students with nine years of general education. Technician training included one to two years of post-secondary education. Most of the training was carried out in educational institutions which had semi-production workshops or experimental farms. The same structure and pattern of organization, with appropriate adaptation, were followed in the specialized vocational training centres (such as medical technology, communications and civil aviation, etc.) operated by other ministries and agencies. These centres combined basic technology education with on-the-job training (a form of apprenticeship), which facilitated transition to the required jobs. The technical ministries and certain industries such as the textile industry also organized short

courses ranging from three months to two years for the training of their workers. The Commerce School, the Kabul Mechanical School, the Jangalak Technical School and the Women's Welfare Institute organized vocational courses for adults. A list of the Ministry of Education technical and vocational schools is presented in Table 10.

Curriculum

The curricula of technical and vocational education schools were developed through the adaptation, as far as possible, of foreign curricula to the needs and situation of Afghanistan. As most of the technical and vocational schools were developed with external bilateral technical assistance, the curricula and organization of training were influenced by the experience of the donor country. Thus the mechanical and craft schools followed the German pattern of vocational training. The Afghan Institute of Technology (AIT), a secondary level technician school, and agricultural schools were based on the American model. The organization of training in the two Technicums, one in Kabul (construction and electrification) and the other in Mazar-i-Sharif (mining and petroleum) was an adaptation of the Russian curriculum. While this pattern of curriculum development did not seem harmonious in terms of national standards, the experience was not necessarily detrimental to the quality of training for a number of reasons. The curriculum of each vocational school was approved by the Ministry of Education, which ensured the general education and culture components of the curriculum, and adherence to basic national education regulations and standards. The countries involved were industrialized, and the diversity of their experience was an enrichment of vocational education in Afghanistan. Furthermore, vocational education in technical standards and curricula continued to be internationalized (UNESCO, 1974, Revised Recommendation and the 1989 International Convention on Technical and Vocational Education).

The Department of Technical and Vocational Education in the ministry, established in 1947, was responsible for the curriculum of technical and vocational education in the country. The vocational schools, with the advice of specialists, had flexibility for the implementation of their curricula and the evaluation of training. Curricula were developed in the following areas of vocational education: agriculture; arts and crafts; technical education; business and administration. In 1965 separate sections were established in the Department of Technical and Vocational Education for each area to ensure the management, supervision and development of vocational schools in the country. In addition, a section for vocational guidance was established to provide services for students and consult with industry and employers regarding vocational training programmes. The vocational schools generally had adequate buildings, modern workshop facilities and laboratory equipment. In the 1970s trained Afghans replaced most of the foreign experts and teachers.

The curriculum and organization of training for each type of vocational school was established according to the objectives and level of training and educational background of the trainees. In secondary level training (technicians), consideration was also given in the curriculum to the basic requirements of higher education, to allow a certain percentage of the graduates to continue post-secondary and university education. While the curricula of vocational schools varied, there were some common elements in the core curricula and organization of vocational training. The academic year in vocational schools was organized in two semesters. The average number of weekly periods in vocational schools was forty to forty-five, as compared with thirty-six periods per week in general secondary schools. The teacher-pupil ratio for general education and theory subjects was 1:25; for practical train-

ing this ratio was maintained between ten to fifteen, depending on the level and depth of training. Evaluation in vocational schools was regular and systematic in the class and workshop.

A minimum of general education and social studies was required in all vocational education programmes. Basic science and mathematics were emphasized in the curriculum of technician training programmes. As in general secondary education, a foreign language was required; in some cases the teaching of the foreign language was more intensive in vocational schools, because many of the vocational texts and references were only available in that language. Thus the mechanical and craft schools and the Institute for Industrial Management taught German as a foreign language; the technical secondary school in Kabul (AIT), agricultural schools, the business and administration schools required English; and the two Technicums taught Russian as a foreign language. This arrangement also facilitated the further training of selected graduates of these institutions abroad.

Specialized vocational training programmes were preceded by one to two years of basic training in general technology. Practical training was organized in one or more of the following ways: training in the school workshop or experimental farm concurrent with class work; block time allocated for training in the workshop or industry, or on an experimental farm; practical training in industries or agricultural extension programmes during school vacations (on-the-job training). The time allocated for practical training and theory at the level of skilled workers was in the ratio of 1:1. This ratio for the practical training of technicians was 1:3, which required more emphasis on general education, basic science and the theory of technology. The distribution of theory and practical work in typical vocational schools is shown in the following Table.

Per cent Time Allocation (%)

Type of School	*(grades)*	*Languages & Social studies*	*Science, Math. Technology*	*Practical Training*
Crafts	(7-10)	19	22	58
Mechanical	(7-10)	24	23	53
Technician	(11-13)	37	32	31
AIT	(10-13)	38	36	26
Agriculture	(10-12)	30	29	41
Commerce	(10-12)	30 (languages)	41 (vocational)	
		29 (general ed.)		
Public	(10-12)	28 (languages)	48 (vocational)	
Administration		24 (general ed.)		

At the request of the Afghan Ministry of Education, UNESCO consultants carried out a study of technical and vocational education in Afghanistan in 1977. The report of the consultants underlined the importance of a uniform orientation of the system, the preparation of teaching and learning materials in national languages (Pashto and Dari) and the development of teacher education programmes. It was noted that a technical and vocational teacher education department had been established at the University of Kabul. The report made the following recommendations: (a) the establishment of a development centre for

technical and vocational education (with two pilot schools, one in a rural area and the other in an urban centre) for preparing curriculum and learning materials; (b) the establishment of a national vocational teacher education institute, with an integrated comprehensive school for teaching practice and a production unit (for industrial training); (c) the establishment of ten new vocational schools and twenty integrated comprehensive schools.

A project was proposed by UNESCO that, if it were implemented, would have reinforced the infrastructure for a national system of technical and vocational education in Afghanistan. It would also have contributed to the implementation of other projects, such as the national scheme for in-plant vocational training, which was being initiated by the Ministry of Mines and Industry in collaboration with the Ministry of Education.

Table 9

The Growth of Vocational Education in Afghanistan Secondary School

(1940-1990)

Year	*Schools*	*Teachers*	*Students*		
			General ed.	*Voc. ed.*	*Voc. ed. (%)*
1940	2	32	1,200	380	32
1950	4	100	3,140	1,880	60
1960	11	130	16,650	2,190	13
1965	14	385	33,980	5,775	17
1970	15	432	107,600	4,970	5
1975	18	664	87,550	5,960	7
1980	22	1,262	124,450	12,410	10
1990			182,340	13,000	7

Note: Due to changes in the structure of secondary education in 1975, enrolment in grades 7 and 8 is not included.

Table 10

Technical and Vocational Institutions

Type	*Location*	*Year Established*	*Level*	*Grade*	*Capacity*
Technical					
Mechanical School	Kabul	1937	Skilled Worker	(7-12)	360
Mechanical School	Kandahar	1958	Skilled Worker	(7-10)	140
Mechanical School	Khost	1958	Skilled Worker	(7-10)	170
Technical School	Kabul	1958	Teacher Training	(11-13)	160
Technical School(AIT)	Kabul	1951	Technician	(10-12/13)	570
Technicum	Mazar	1971	Technician	(10-12)	500
Technicum	Kabul	1972	Technician	(10-12)	250
Arts and Crafts					
Craft School	Kabul	1923	Skilled Worker	(7-12)	200
Art School	Kabul	1937	Art teacher	(7-12)	60
Craft School	Farah	1958	Skilled worker	(7-9)	120
Music School	Kabul	1960	Courses		150
Business and Administration					
Commerce School	Kabul	1948	Office/Clerical	(7-12)	750
Adults Section	Kabul	1963	Office/Clerical	(9-12)	
Belqis Girls School	Kabul	1959	Office/Clerical	(7-12)	400
Public Adm. School	Kabul	1966	Office/Clerical	(10-12)	270
Hotel Management	Kabul	1963	Skilled Worker	(7-9)	100
Industrial Management	Kabul	1962	Specialist	(13-15)	175
Agriculture					
Ag. School	Kabul/Helmand	1944	Technician	(9-12)	200
Ag. School	Baghlan	1961	Technician	(9-12)	280
Ag. School	Farah	1975	Technician	(9-12)	280
Ag. School	Herat	1976	Technician	(9-12)	280
Ag. School	Faryab	1976	Technician	(9-12)	280
Ag. School	Nangarhar	1976	Technician	(9-12)	280
Ag. School	Balkh	1976	Technician	(9-12)	280

Note: This list represents the situation in 1978. Specialized training centres for nursing and medical technology, communications, civil aviation, topographic and cadastral survey, public works, agricultural extension, apprenticeship in industry, arts and handicrafts and projects for adult women are not included.

Teacher Education

The first teacher training school was set up in Kabul (1923), in which about one hundred young men with the equivalent of primary education were admitted. They graduated four years later as teachers. The school gradually developed in terms of programme and facilities and trained the required teachers. In 1939 a new building with a capacity of one thousand students was constructed in Kabul for the basic teacher training school. With the beginning of the expansion of education in the early 1950s, special attention was given to teacher education as an important pre-requisite for the development of education in the country. In 1954, a team of specialists from the Teachers' College, Columbia University, New York, came to Afghanistan, under a technical assistance programme with the United States, to advise the Ministry of Education on the development of teacher education. A number of seminars were organized to study the problems and issues related to the development of teacher education in the country. The first such national seminar involving provincial Directors of Education and responsible officials of the Ministry of Education was organized in Kandahar, which made important recommendations for the development of teacher education.

In 1956, in addition to improvements in the Kabul teacher training school, three new teacher training schools were established in the provinces (Herat, Kandahar and Nangarhar). The Institute of Education, that was established in 1955, provided professional support for teacher training programmes. In 1962 the Faculty of Education was established at the University. In the mid-1960s, the national teacher education system was reinforced in terms of new structures and programmes (the Academy for Teacher Educators and the Higher Teachers' College), through a multilateral technical assistance project provided by UNESCO, UNDP and UNICEF. In 1967 a separate department of teacher education was established in the Ministry of Education to supervise all non-university teacher training institutions and programmes, and conduct in-service training courses for teachers.

Teaching was always a respected profession in Afghan society. In villages teachers were expected to set moral and ethical standards, and were treated as community leaders. In general teacher-training institutions attracted students of good educational standards (average or higher). With the expansion of education in the 1950s, the government took a number of measures to promote and encourage the teaching profession. Teachers were civil servants who had job security and other favourable employment conditions. For the same civil service ranks, teachers had higher salaries (up to twenty-five per cent) compared with other branches of the civil service. As long as a teacher performed satisfactorily, his or her promotion was assured up to the top civil service ranks (no administrative constraints). Teachers could choose to stay in teaching for six years with full salary, in lieu of one or two years of military service (compulsory conscription). To honour the teaching profession, a day was officially designated as Teachers' Day, which was celebrated annually. A Teachers' Medal (Pohana) was created for merit and long service and given to selected teachers. A special "Teachers' Fund" was established to assist needy teachers through small interest-free loans.

Organization

Teachers were trained in teacher training institutions, supervised by the Ministry of Education, and at the university mainly for teaching in secondary schools. The admission requirements, duration of study and curriculum, depended on the type and level of the

school (village, primary, middle or secondary) and the subject and method of teaching concerned. The standards that were applied, as far as possible, were the following: in village schools one teacher was responsible for grades one to three; in primary schools, there were class teachers for each grade one to three and teachers with focus on language and social studies, arithmetic, science and practical work in grades four to six; in lower secondary or middle level (grades seven to nine), there were teachers for national languages (Pashto and Dari), including a foreign language, science and mathematics, history and geography. Teachers of upper secondary classes (grades ten to twelve) were subject specialists in national languages and literature, foreign language, science (physics/mathematics or chemistry/biology), social studies (history/geography), home economics, etc. The faculty of theological studies and a number of secondary level theological schools in Kabul and provinces trained teachers for religion, Arabic and ethics. Teachers for sports were trained at the physical education school.

Teachers for post-secondary and higher education were university graduates with advanced education and training in foreign universities in scientific and technological fields, social studies, economics, law, education, etc. Technical and vocational education teachers were trained at the faculties of engineering and agriculture, Polytechnic Institute, secondary technical teacher training institute and the art school. As most of the technical and vocational institutions were developed with foreign technical assistance, the training of key teaching and supervisory personnel was an important component of these projects. In the field of teacher education, a significant number of teachers, administrators and curriculum specialists received advanced training in foreign universities in the context of the USAID technical assistance, or the United Nations' fellowship programme. A number of teachers and supervisors of three secondary schools in Kabul (Istiqlal, Malalai and Nejat) were trained through scholarships in France and Germany.

The organization of teacher training was adapted to the situation in Afghanistan and evolved with experience as well as the availability of human and material resources. A list of significant teacher training institutions functioning in 1975 is presented in Table 11. The organization of teacher training for different levels of education were as follows:

Primary Teacher Training

1. Teachers for primary education were trained in grades ten to twelve of Basic Teacher Training Schools. These were modern residential schools, with teaching and library and laboratory facilities, including one or more experimental/practising schools in the vicinity. Students with nine years of general education were admitted to these teacher training schools. About one-third of the graduates of these schools, upon graduation, could continue higher education in the teaching profession. In 1970, there were eight secondary level teacher training schools in the following cities: Kabul, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Balkh, Herat, Gardez, Kunduz and Charikar. Each teacher training centre served the surrounding region. In 1968, with the availability of an increasing number of secondary school graduates, the three-year teacher training programme that covered both general education and professional training, was replaced by one year of professional training (grade thirteen) for students who had completed secondary education (grade twelve). By 1975, the majority of primary teacher education was carried out in a one year post- secondary training programme.
2. In order to train teachers for certain remote areas with a shortage of teachers, an emergency teacher training project was launched in 1962 by establishing twenty-nine sections

(including thirteen residential sections) for graduates of primary schools to continue general education (grades seven to nine), followed by one year of professional training. About seventy-five per cent of the graduates were assigned as teachers in primary schools and the rest continued the three-year regular programme in the teacher training school. Through this scheme over 5,000 teachers were trained between 1962 and 1970. The growth of teacher education between 1940 and 1990 is presented in Table 12 and Figure 8.

Teacher Training for Middle Schools

3. Teachers for middle schools (grades seven to nine) were trained in a section of the basic teacher training schools until the mid-1960s. In 1964, the Higher Teachers' College (grades thirteen to fourteen) was established in Kabul to train teachers for the middle school. This was a co-educational post-secondary institution which admitted graduates of secondary schools and trained them for two years with specialization in science and mathematics or humanities (languages and social studies). A certain percentage of graduates from primary teacher training institutions could also continue their studies in the Higher Teachers' College. By 1975, in addition to the College in Kabul, four other Higher Teachers' Colleges were established in Kandahar, Balkh, Nangarhar and Herat. These five colleges graduated about four hundred teachers annually for middle schools.

Teacher Training for Secondary Schools

4. The University of Kabul trained teachers for lycees (grades ten to twelve). The following faculties were primarily concerned with teacher training : Faculty of Science, Faculty of Letters and Humanities, and Faculty of Education. These were co-educational institutions with four year programmes leading to a University Degree equivalent to B.A. or B.Sc. The Faculty of Science trained teachers with specialization in physics and mathematics or biology and chemistry. The Faculty of Letters trained teachers with a focus on philosophy and languages or history and geography. Until the 1960s the programme of the Faculties of Science and Letters did not include any professional training for teachers. With the establishment of the Faculty of Education, special pedagogical courses were given to the students of other faculties. Teachers for English language, art and home economics and supervisors for different subject areas were trained by the Faculty of Education.

The Training of Teacher Educators

5. With the expansion of teacher training institutions in the 1960s, the provision of qualified staff for these institutions became an important consideration. For this purpose the Academy for Teacher Educators was established (1964) in Kabul to train university graduates with teaching experience for one to two years. This was a co-educational institution that offered studies in the theory and practice of education as well as in the methodology of teacher training. By 1970, the Academy had trained 160 teacher educators, who were assigned to the newly established teacher training institutions. The Faculty of Education also trained teachers for professional subjects in teacher education.

In-Service Teacher Training

6. The Institute of Education initiated the in-service training programme in 1955 for teachers who needed qualifications in general education or professional training. These courses were organized during the summer and winter school vacations in Kabul and Kandahar. The Institute offered courses from grade seven to sixteen. By 1966 over six thousand teachers benefited from these courses and obtained the relevant qualification. In addition, the Institute of Education offered a number of short courses, workshops and seminars for science, mathematics and English language teachers and supervisors. The Faculty of Education conducted post-secondary in-service training for teachers, supervisors and education administrators. With the establishment of a separate department of teacher education in the Ministry of Education in 1967, the responsibility for the in-service training of teachers was transferred to this department. In-service training was decentralized to teacher training institutions in Kabul and the provinces. In cooperation with UNESCO a national broadcasting programme by radio was developed for the in-service education of teachers.

Curriculum

The curriculum of the first teacher training school was prescribed by Afghan scholars and teachers, based on the experience of other countries including Turkey. The teacher training programmes were continuously developed, and adapted, to the needs and possibilities of the country. The Ministry of Education gave high priority to teacher training institutions in terms of the quality of teaching and supervisory staff, as well as physical facilities including laboratories and experimental schools. There was a balance in the curriculum for general education, education theory and professional training including practice teaching. By the early 1960s all textbooks for teacher education were professionally developed in Pashto and Dari. Typical curricula of teacher education for primary schools and middle schools in the 1960s are presented in Tables 13 and 14.

Table 11

Teacher Training Institutions

Type	*Location (Grades)*	*Year*	*Leve*
Primary Teacher Training	Kabul	1938	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Kandahar	1956	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Nangarhar	1956	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Herat	1956	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Balkh	1966	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Gardez	1965	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Kunduz	1966	10-12
Primary Teacher Training	Charikar	1967	10-12
Higher Teachers' College	Kabul	1964	13-14
Higher Teachers' College	Kandahar	1968	13-14
Higher Teachers' College	Balkh	1968	13-14
Higher Teachers' College	Nangarhar	1972	13-14
Higher Teachers' College	Herat	1972	13-14
Academy for Teacher Educators	Kabul	1964	17-18
Faculty of Education	Kabul U.	1962	13-16
Faculty of Letters	Kabul U.	1942	13-16
Faculty of Science	Kabul U.	1944	13-16
Arts and Crafts School	Kabul	1958	10-12
Sports School	Kabul	1958	10-12
Theological Schools (2)	Kabul	1923, 1944	7-12
Theological Schools (2)	Herat	1933, 1940	7-12
Theological School	Kunduz	1943	7-12
Theological School	Maimana		7-12
Theological School	Nangarhar	1930	7-12
Theological School	Balkh	1936	7-12

Note : As of 1970 primary teacher training was upgraded to one year of post-secondary (grade 13) professional education for graduates of secondary schools.

Table 12

The Growth of Teacher Education in Afghanistan
(1940-1990 Quantitative Data)

Year	*Institutions*	*Teachers*	*Students*
1940	1	20	500
1950	1	30	750
1960	6	156	3,900
1965	9		5,600
1970	14		4,170
1975	16	258	3,275
1977	16		5,400
1990	16		6,245

Note: University faculties and theological schools are not included. 1965-1970 enrolment includes emergency (accelerated) teacher training programme.

The Qualifications of Teachers in the Education System
(1970 Statistics)

Level	*Primary education*		*Secondary education*		*Vocational education*		*Teacher education*		*Total (%)*	
	M	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*	*M*	*F*		
University Degree	3	89	312	169	50	16	118	13	770	(4.2)
Teachers College	38	39	258	150	19	–	23	–	527	(2.5)
Teacher Training	1,565	85	1,496	14	201	–	58	–	3,419	(19.2)
Secondary ed.	1,406	986	1,146	251	56	10	85	–	3,940	(21.9)
Below Secondary	5,359	878	346	58	20	12	–	–	6,673	(37.1)
Private education	2,557	102	43	5	1	–	23	–	2,731	(15.2)
Total	**10,928**	**2,179**	**3,601**	**647**	**347**	**38**	**307**	**13**	**18,060**	
(%)	**(73)**		**(23.2)**		**(2.0)**		**(1.8)**			

M: male
F: female

Table 13

The Curriculum of Primary Teacher Training (Periods per Week)

Subjects	Grades X	Grades XI	Grades XII
Education, Psychology	3	3	3
Teaching Practice			23
Pashto, Dari	6	6	4
English	4	6	1.6
History, Geography, Economics	6	6	1.6
Mathematics	4	6	2
Science	9	6	2.3
Agriculture	4	2	
Health education		1	
Arts and Crafts	3	3	2
Theology	2	2	1
Total	**41**	**41**	**41**

Note: As of 1970, the curriculum of primary teacher training was gradually replaced by one year of post-secondary professional training (grade 13) forgraduates of secondary schools.

Table 14

The Curriculum of the Higher Teachers' College
Middle School Teachers (Periods per Week)

Subjects / Grades	Science Section XIII	Science Section XIV	Social Studies Section XIII	Social Studies Section XIV
Chemistry	4	4		
Biology	4	4		
Physics	4	4		
Mathematics	4	4		
Practical Science	1	1		
History			5	5
Geography			6	6
Dari	3	3	3	3
Pashto	3	3	3	3
English			6	6
Education	2	2	3	3
Psychology	3	2	3	3
Teaching Methods	3	3	3	2
Teaching Materials	2	2	2	2
Health	1	1	1	1
Physical Education	1	1	1	1
Islamic Law	1	1	1	1
Library	1	1	1	1
Assembly	2	2	2	2
Total	**39**	**39**	**39**	**39**

Note: The first Higher Teachers' College was established in Kabul in 1964

Higher Education

Modern higher education in Afghanistan began with the establishment of the Faculty of Medicine in 1932, followed by the Faculty of Law (1938), the Faculty of Science (1942), and the Faculty of Letters (1944). These Faculties were the basis of the University of Kabul when it was established in 1946. In 1947 the Women's Faculty was organized for teacher training with two sections for science and social studies (in 1960 the Women's Faculty was integrated in the corresponding co-educational faculties). The Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies was established in 1951. The Institute of Education was set up in 1955, and became part of the University of Kabul one year later. With the launching of the first five-year economic development plan in 1956, attention was given to the development of higher education. New buildings were constructed in Ali Abad for several faculties and the administration of the University of Kabul as well as residential facilities and a central library. The administration of the university moved to its new facilities in 1963. Four new institutions were added to the University of Kabul: the Faculty of Economics (1957), the Faculty of Pharmacy (1959), the Faculty of Education (1962) and the Polytechnic Institute (1967). In 1963 a Faculty of Medicine was established in Nangarhar. Parallel to the University structure, several institutions of higher education were developed in the 1960s by the Ministry of Education for teacher education as well as the Institute for Industrial Management, (1962).

The academic and administrative affairs of the University of Kabul were governed by the provision of the decree of 1946 to the Ministry of Education authorizing its establishment with the aim of education and training, the dissemination of knowledge and public service. The university was under the authority of the Minister of Education and its administration was entrusted to the President of the University, deans of faculties and the University Academic Senate. In 1968 the Constitution of Universities was enacted, and as stated in Article 1, the principle objectives of the university are the preservation, dissemination and advancement of knowledge; strengthening personal and social responsibility in youth; and training youth to realize Islamic, national, legal and political values in order to serve Afghan society and mankind. According to the Constitution, all policy matters related to the development of universities was entrusted to the Board of Trustees (chaired by the Minister of Education), and the Academic Senate under the chairmanship of the University President. In 1977 the government proposed to establish a Ministry of Higher Education for the supervision and development of higher education in the country.

The development of higher education was relatively significant during the 1960s and 1970s. The enrolment in higher education was 1,700 including 157 female students in 1960; it increased to 12,260 in 1975, which included 1,680 female students; the enrolment at the University of Kabul was 8,680. In 1975, there were 1,100 academic staff members in higher education, including sixty-four female teachers. In 1980 the number of students in higher education per 100,000 inhabitants was 130, which was smaller compared with the neighbouring countries (Pakistan 189, India 515, Iran 350). The growth of higher education is shown in Table 15, and Figures 7 and 8. The share of student enrolments, as a percentage, between different levels and types of education (secondary, vocational, teacher training and higher education) and the growth of female/male education, are presented in Figures 9, 10 and 11 and Table 16.

There were many constraints for the development of modern higher education in Afghanistan. A small education system, the shortage of trained Afghan staff, the lack of facilities and resources, and only a few decades of development history. Nevertheless, from the early 1950s, important measures were taken to develop the University of Kabul. In addition to national efforts, bilateral technical cooperation with a number of countries such as France, Germany, the USA and the USSR contributed to the development of higher education in Afghanistan.

In view of the cost of higher education (which was free) and the limitation of physical and material resources, special attention was given to adjust the training to the social and economic requirements of the country. Certain faculties such as Medicine and Law attracted the majority of secondary school graduates. The teacher-training faculties were less popular. It was decided to set enrolment targets for each faculty in the context of the five-year economic development plans. Beginning in 1966 the university introduced an entrance examination. Admission to the university was regulated by the entrance examination, which took into account the abilities and wishes of the students and the academic requirements and enrolment quota of each faculty. Provision was made for differences in the standards of secondary schools in the provinces. In 1970 the University of Kabul had an enrolment of about 6,000 students distributed to different fields as follows: medicine (24 %), engineering (25%), science (9 %), agriculture (5 %), economics and law (10 %), letters and humanities (13 %), education (10 %) and theology (4 %).

The provision of qualified staff was a major concern for the development of higher education. The university had to compete with other government offices to attract the limited number of qualified Afghans trained in scientific and technological fields, economics, law, etc. At the same time, it was necessary to encourage scholarship and research in the university academic staff, through appropriate incentives to maintain and improve the quality of higher education. In 1955 an important measure was taken to promote the status of academic members of the university. A new set of regulations was established regarding the qualifications and academic ranks of university staff members and the corresponding moral and material privileges. The conditions for promotion were based on research and publications, as well as a specified minimum period of teaching. Each academic rank carried a fixed amount of additional remuneration, that was paid monthly together with the regular salary. Furthermore, the university provided its academic members with the opportunity for research and studies in appropriate universities abroad. These measures contributed significantly to attracting and keeping qualified staff in institutions of higher education.

To ensure the quality of higher education especially in the scientific fields, the University of Kabul established cooperation with several universities abroad through technical cooperation and affiliation schemes. The Faculty of Medicine and the Faculty of Pharmacy were cooperating with the corresponding Faculties of the University of Lyon (France), and the Faculty of Law established academic cooperation and exchange with the University of Paris. The Faculty of Science and the Faculty of Economics had affiliation with the Universities of Bonn and Koln respectively in Germany. The Faculty of Engineering and the Faculty of Agriculture were working with several universities in the United States; the University of Columbia (New York) assisted in the establishment and development of the Institute of Education and the Faculty of Education, which was later (in the 1970's) supported by the University of Nebraska. The Polytechnic Institute, which was developed with the technical cooperation of the USSR, worked closely with appropriate institutions of higher education in that country. These arrangements provided for assistance

in the development of programmes and teaching materials, the exchange of academic staff members, undertaking joint research projects, the training of Afghan counterparts and the provision of laboratory and workshop equipment.

The University of Kabul had full autonomy for its academic affairs. Each faculty established its curriculum and courses for different specializations and the professors were responsible for the content of courses and the evaluation of students. The teaching methods and organization of courses reflected the background and experience of each faculty member. The curriculum and organization of teaching in the Faculties of Medicine, Science, Economics, Engineering, Agriculture, Education and the Polytechnic, which had bilateral technical cooperation with external universities, were influenced by the experience of partner institutions, with adaptation to the needs and situation of the University of Kabul. Afghan professors lectured mainly in Dari or Pashto. The foreign professors lectured in their own languages (French, English, German or Russian) which were translated by Afghan counterparts. The students were expected to learn the relevant foreign language in order to benefit from the teaching materials and textbooks.

The development of textbooks in Afghan languages, especially in scientific and technological fields, was a principle objective of the university, and a pre-requisite for the expansion of higher education in Afghanistan. By 1968, the Afghan professors and other academic members developed 350 textbooks and teaching guides in the following fields: medicine (170), science (44), law and economic (96), letters and humanities (40). As reference materials, a number of periodicals were published:

Pashtani Tebi Mojala (medicine), Science Journal, Science and Technology (agriculture), Iqtesad Sailani Mojala (economics), Geography Journal, Mojala Adab and Mojala Wajma (letters and humanities). The University of Kabul had a modern and well-equipped central library that was established in 1963. The central library had a collection of 80,000 reference books, of which seventy-five percent were in western languages.

The University of Kabul did not have a significant graduate programme, and consequently research work was limited to the needs and interests of the academic staff members. Other than the MD degree for doctors, the university offered a degree equivalent to B.A or B.Sc. after completing four or five years of post-secondary education successfully. To encourage applied scientific research, based on the proposal of a member of the Faculty of Science, Saif Samady, to the President of the University of Kabul, a research laboratory was established in 1960, with the technical assistance of the Asia Foundation (USA). On the basis of this initiative, the University established a Research Centre in 1964 for promotion of scientific research. A Research Board was set up in 1967 to consider proposals for financial and technical support. In the late 1960s different faculties carried out some twenty scientific research projects. In the field of Afghan languages, literature and history, in additions to the relevant departments of the university, two autonomous bodies, the Pashto Tolana and the Afghan Historical Society, were promoting and conducting research.

Higher Education Institutions

University of Kabul (Established in 1946)
1975 Statistics: 8680 students; 825 academic staff members

Faculty of Medicine
Departments: Internal medicine; Surgery; Ophthalmology; Oto-Rhino-Laryngology; Gynaecology; Paediatrics; Neurology and psychiatry; Dermatology; Public health.

Faculty of Pharmacy
Departments: Pharmacology; Clinical pharmacy; Medical plants; Analytical chemistry; Microbiology; Toxicology.

Faculty of Science
Departments: Mathematics; Physics; Chemistry; Biology; Geology and mining; Meteorology; Specialized laboratories: Nuclear laboratory; Spectrography; Electronics; Meteorology; Paleontology (study of fossils); Mesology and petrography (study of rocks); and the research laboratories of the Institutes of Chemistry, Physics, Zoology and Parasitology.

Faculty of Agriculture
Departments: Animal science; Plant science; Veterinary science; Agricultural education; Agricultural development; Economics of agriculture.

Faculty of Engineering
Departments: Civil engineering; Mechanical engineering; Electrical engineering; Agricultural engineering; Architecture. The curriculum of the Faculty of Engineering was covered in five years including six months of practical training in industry.

Polytechnic Institute
Departments: Construction (urban and industrial buildings; canals and dams; roads); Urban and industrial electrification; Mineral exploitation; Exploitation of petroleum and gas; Technology of oil refinery. The curriculum of the Polytechnic was covered in five years including six months of practical training in industry.

Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences
Departments: Pashto language and literature; Dari language and literature; Arabic language and literature; French language and literature; German language and literature; History; Geography; Journalism; Four Research Institutes for Geography; Linguistics; Fine Arts; Human Sciences and Anthropology.

Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies
Graduates of secondary theological schools were accepted in this Faculty. The principle courses were related to Theological Studies and Islamic Law and Arabic language and literature. In 1968 a Section of Islamic Studies was established for women students, who were graduates of general secondary schools (lycee). The Faculty of Theology and Islamic Studies had cooperation with the Al-Azhar University in Cairo.

Faculty of Law
Departments: Islamic law; Private and fundamental law; Public law; International relations (including economic relations).

Faculty of Economics
Departments: Economic theory; Industrial development; Agricultural development; Finance; Commerce and exchange; Banking and insurance; Management and Consultation.

Faculty of Education
Departments: Science and mathematics; Social studies; English language; Art and home economics; Education theory and methods.

Institute of Education
Departments: In-service teacher training; English language; Audio-visual aids; Research and evaluation; Women's education.

University of Nangarhar (established in 1963)

Faculty of Medicine (Associated with the Faculty of Medicine in Kabul)

Other Institutions of Higher Education
Higher Teachers' Colleges (Kabul, Kandahar, Nangarhar, Herat, Balkh)
Academy for Teacher Educators (Post-graduate training in Kabul)
Institute of Industrial Management (Equivalent of Licence in Kabul)

Table 15

The Growth of Higher Education in Afghanistan (1960-1995 Student Enrolment)

Year	University		Non-University		All Institutions		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	Total
1960	1,540	157					1,694
1965	2,603	646	202	-	2,805	646	3,451
1968	4,191	754	251	46	4,442	800	5,242
1970	5,339	876	1,358	259	6,697	1,135	7,832
1975	7,881	800	2,964	881	10,575	1,681	12,256
1977	8,768	1,583	2,965	3,101	11,463	4,684	16,147
1980					13,000	5,000	18,000
1986					19,182	3,124	22,306
1990	5,397	3,970	11,467	3,499	16,864	7,469	24,333
1995	7,560	3,095					10,655

The Distribution of Students in Different Fields (Enrolment in University)

Faculty	1967	(%)	1971	(%)	1975	(%)
Medicine (Kabul)	636	(16.5)	954	(15.6)	1,354	(15.6)
Medicine (Nangarhar)	107	(2.3)	480	(7.8)	680	(7.9)
Science	370	(9.6)	518	(8.5)	736	(8.5)
Engineering	369	(9.5)	517	(8.4)	734	(8.5)
Polytechnic	225	(5.8)	1,040	(17.0)	1,476	(17.0)
Agriculture	196	(5.1)	314	(5.1)	456	(5.3)
Economics	296	(7.6)	320	(5.2)	454	(5.2)
Law	450	(11.6)	320	(5.2)	450	(5.2)
Humanities and Letters	574	(14.8)	804	(13.1)	1,132	(13.2)
Theology	222	(5.7)	266	(4.3)	378	(4.4
Education	420	(10.9)	588	(9.6)	830	(9.6)
Total		3,865		6,121		8,680

Figure 7

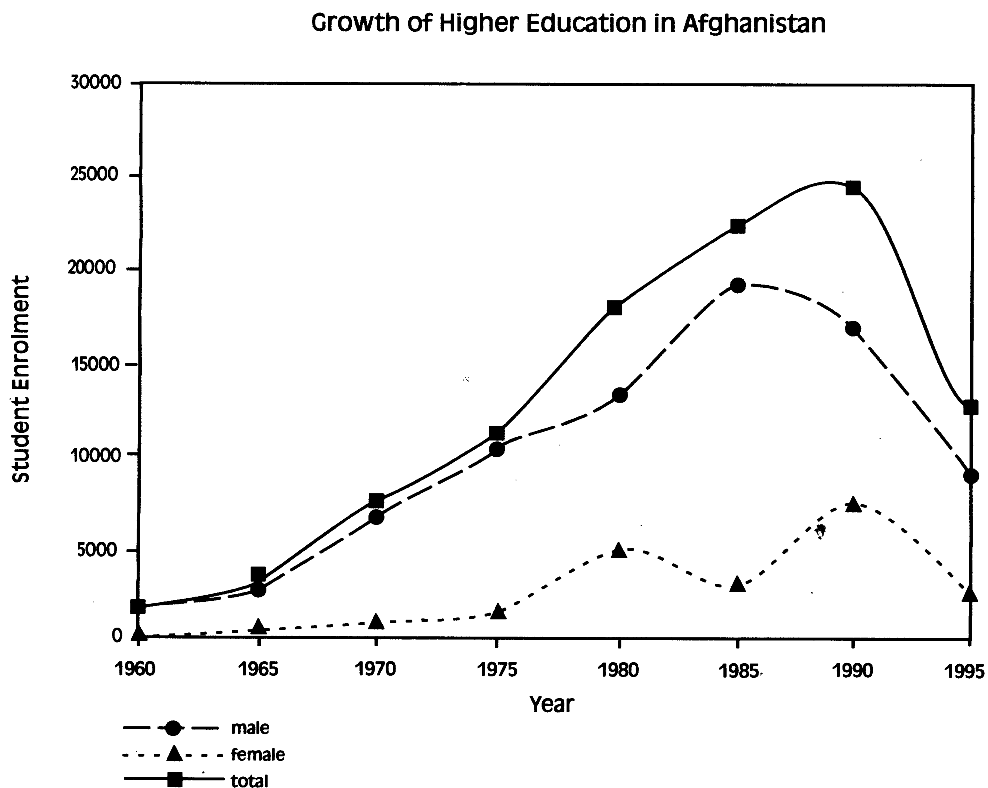


Figure 8

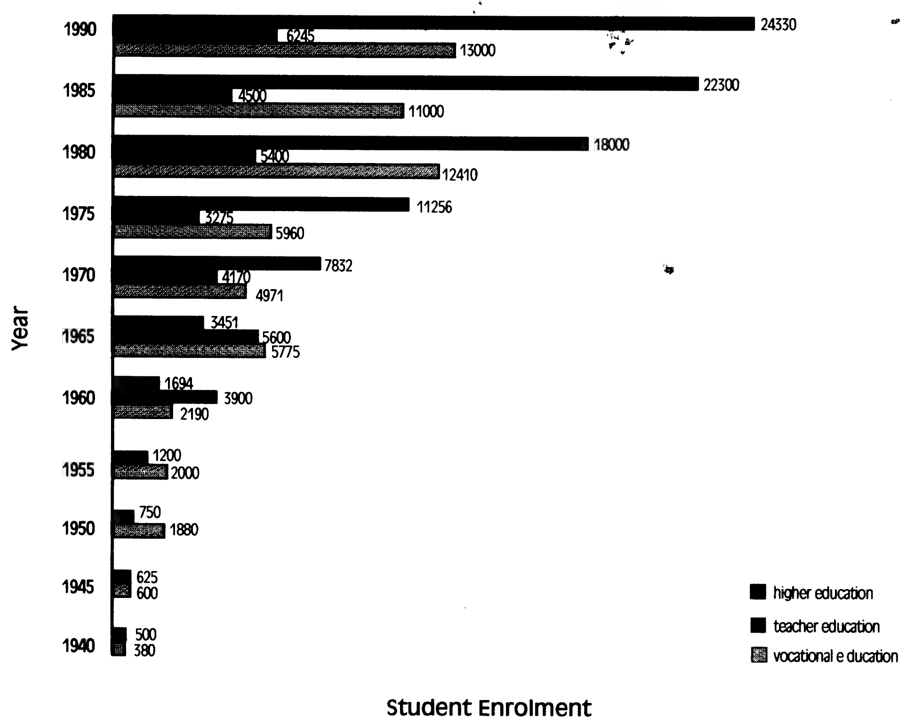
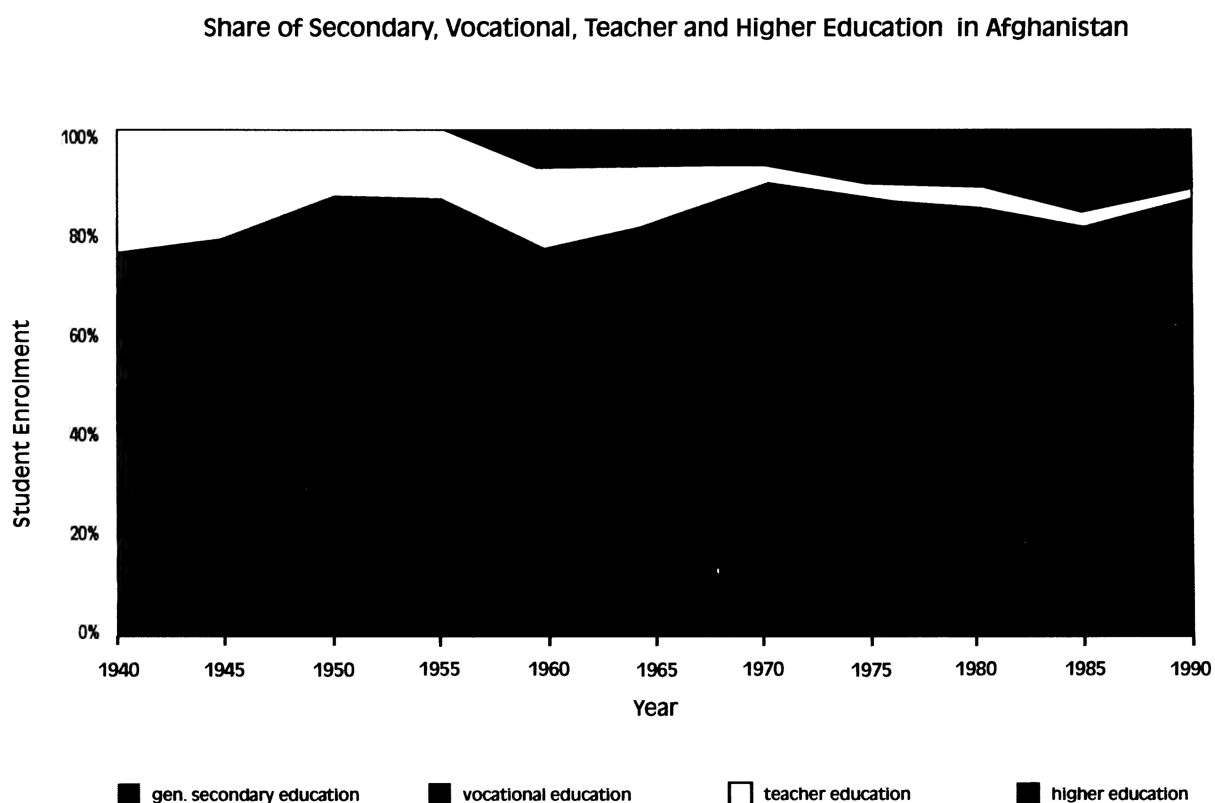


Figure 9



Share of Secondary, Vocational, Teacher and Higher Education in Afghanistan
100%
80%
60%
40%
20%
0%
Student Enrolment
1940
1945
1950
1955
1960
1965
1970
1975
1980
1985
1990
Year
gen. secondary education
vocational education
teacher education
higher education

Table 16

The Growth of Female/Male Education in Afghanistan
(Enrolment in General Education: 1940-1999)

Year	*Primary Education*			*Secondary Education*			*Total*		
	M	*F*	*(%) F*	*M*	*F*	*(%) F*	*M*	*F*	*(%) F*
1940							57,900	900	(1.5)
1950	87,444	3,970	(4)	2,800	340	(9)	90,244	4,310	(4.5)
1955	108,940	8,950		8,125	1,000		117,065	9,950	(8)
1960	155,719	19,939	(11)	13,590	3,060	(18)	169,309	22,999	(12)
1965	303,739	54,298	(15)	27,530	6,450	(19)	331,269	60,748	(15)
1970	464,542	76,143	(10)	92,850	14,750	(14)	618,140	90,893	(13)
1975	668,773	115,795	(15)	77,680	9,870	(11)	746,453	125,665	(14)
1980	917,413	198,560	(18)	98,320	26,130	(21)	1,015,773	224,690	(18)
1985	401,472	179,027	(31)	71,790	33,240	(32)	473,262	212,267	(31)
1990	410,846	211,667	(34)	90,257	92,083		501,103	303,750	(37)
1993	609,329	74,667	(11)						
1999	811,495	64,110	(7)						

Enrolment in Vocational, Teacher Training and Higher Education
(1950 - 1995)

Year	*Vocational Education*			*Teacher Training*			*Higher Education*		
	M	*F*	*(%) F*	*M*	*F*	*(%) F*	*M*	*F*	*(%) F*
1950							396	80	
1960							1,540	157	(9)
1965							2,805	646	(20)
1970	4,491	477	(9)	1,094	249	(18)	6,697	1,135	(15)
1975	5,309	651	(11)	2,449	826	(25)	10,575	1,681	(14)
1977							11,463	4,684	(29)
1980				2,760	2,636	(49)	13,000	5,000	(28)
1986							19,182	3,124	(14)
1990							16,864	7,469	(31)
1995							7,700	3,000	

Figure 10

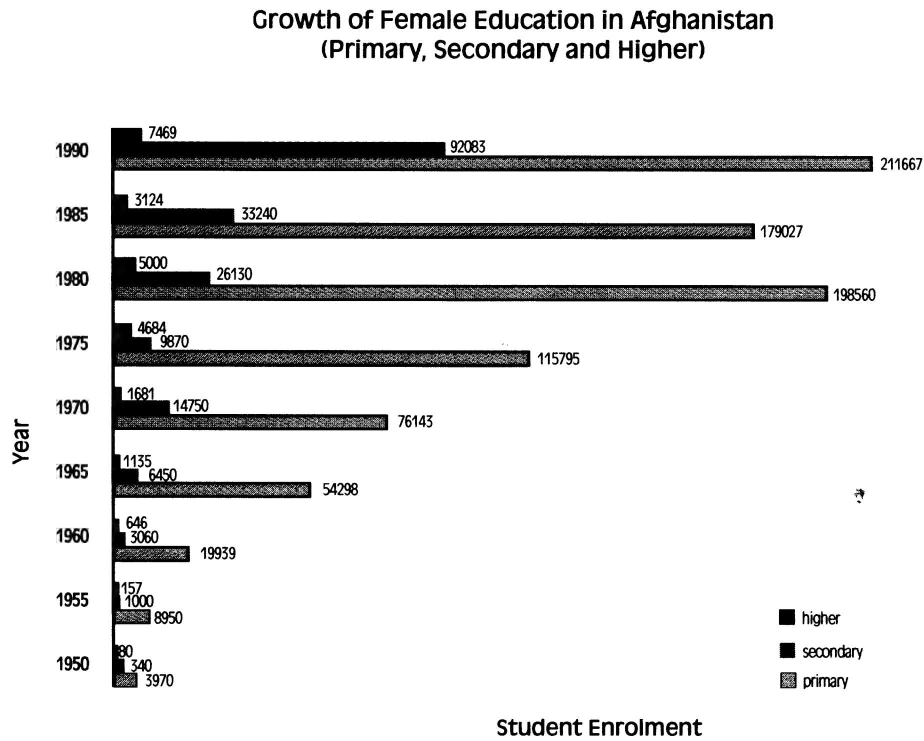
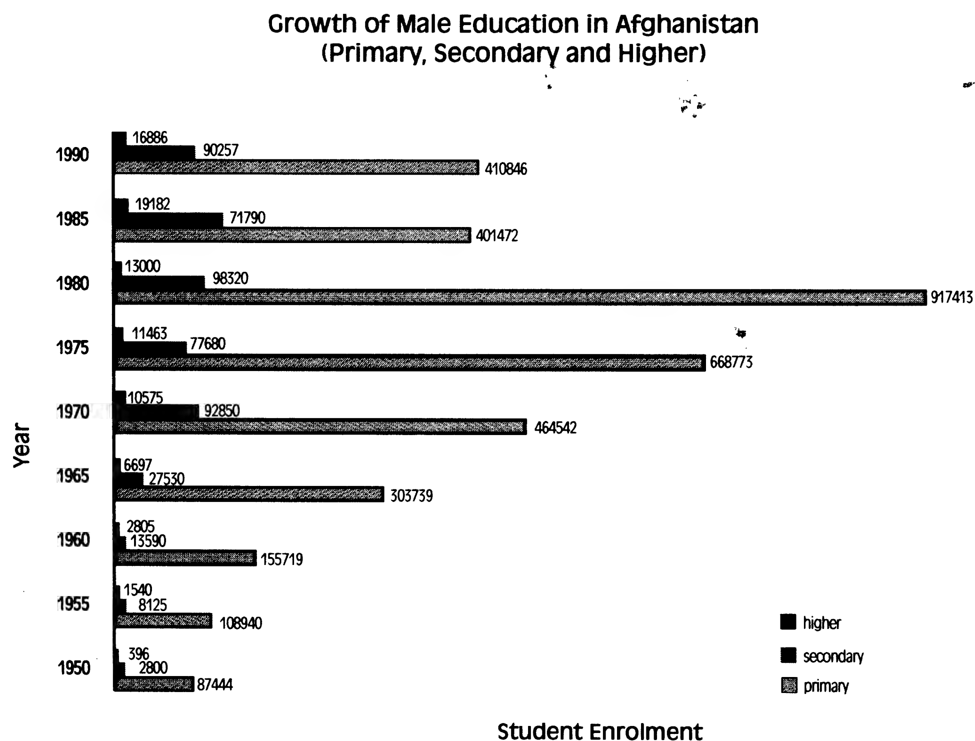


Figure 11





Education in the Democratic Republic (1978 - 1991)

In April 1978, the Republic of Afghanistan (Headed by the President M. Daoud) was overthrown in a coup d'etat by two Afghan communist parties (Khalq and Parcham) and their agents in the military, and the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (DRA) was proclaimed. The Soviet Union immediately recognized the new government. The formation of a communist government in a nation of devout Muslims, with their tradition and values threatened, faced strong opposition by the majority of the people. The Afghan resistance and fighting continued throughout the 1980s under the leadership of different groups of mujahidin (Islamic resistance). As a consequence, in spite of direct Soviet intervention in December 1979, and its substantial political, military and material support, the communist regime in Afghanistan, which lasted more than a decade, collapsed. In accordance with a UN-sponsored Agreement, the Soviet forces withdrew from Afghanistan in February, 1989, though the communist government remained in Kabul until the beginning of 1992.

Afghan society and social and economic activities, including education, suffered enormously during the 1980s. About six million people (of a population of about 16 million) left the country and took refuge in neighbouring countries (mainly Pakistan and Iran). As a result of fighting, over one million people were killed and much of the basic social and economic infrastructures, including about two-thirds of the schools, were destroyed. In 1978 there were more than one million students in primary and secondary schools and other educational institutions in Afghanistan. By 1985, the enrolment in all schools and educational institutions in Afghanistan was down to around 700,000 students, as a result of the exodus of people and fighting.

The damage to the infrastructure for primary education, especially in the villages and rural areas, was very substantial. Table 18 presents the statistics for primary education between 1978 and 1990, reflecting its quantitative reduction. In 1978, there were 3,352 primary schools with 995,650 pupils including 152,750 girls and 29,900 male and female teachers (5,070 females); the corresponding data for 1990 were 586 government primary schools, 628,800 pupils including 214,560 girls and 16,500 male and female teachers (8,870 females). During this period, the reductions in the number of boys in primary schools and number of male teachers were very significant, due to fighting and the loss or departure of teachers. There was an increase in the number of female teachers in primary schools, but the majority (about seventy-five per cent) of female teachers were in Kabul schools. Due to a shortage of teachers and school buildings, the average class size increased from thirty-one pupils per class in 1978 to forty pupils per class in 1990. In some schools (north east, west and east central Afghanistan) the class size in 1990 was between sixty to ninety pupils. The average school size was 291 pupils per school in 1978, while this ratio increased to 1,068 in 1990.

Graphs and Tables

Graphs

Tables

Education Policy

The Democratic Republic of Afghanistan, which came into being with the objective of transforming Afghan society, considered education as a fundamental instrument of government policy. In close collaboration with the Soviet political and education advisers, the government formulated an education policy which (a) conformed to the country's political objectives and agenda and (b) adapted the education system to the Soviet model of education in order to facilitate closer collaboration in education and training.

The government's policy in education was clearly reflected in the "Fundamental Principles of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan", as approved in April 1980. The relevant Articles are as follows:

Article 24 - Plans will be implemented to eradicate illiteracy, expand education, public health and social security, science and technology, culture and arts, physical education, sports and vital services in a continuous manner.

Article 26 - The government takes upon itself to take care of the youth, and provide them with educational and vocational training, and help them to get jobs, create favourable conditions for their spiritual and moral education and their physical growth, so that they could participate in a creative manner in the building of a new society.

Article 29 - Referring to the rights of citizens, the right to education (sub-article 5) stated: The government will adopt measures to develop national progressive education, eradicate illiteracy, provide instruction in mother tongues, expand free secondary, vocational, technical and higher education.

In order to realize these principles, the Revolutionary Council of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan issued the following two decrees in April 1980:

1. All DRA citizens, irrespective of their nationality, race, sex, religion and socio-economic position enjoy equal rights to education, and universal primary education will be free and compulsory throughout the country. Furthermore, all citizens of Afghanistan are entitled to choose the medium of instruction in their mother tongue as offered by schools and other educational institutions. The decree calls for the legal punishment of parents or guardians who prevent children from acquiring compulsory primary education.
2. The second decree stressed the importance of literacy skills for the urban and rural population and proclaimed the National Literacy Campaign throughout the country. The aim of the campaign was to provide literacy to all the male population aged ten to fifty by 1987 in urban areas, and by 1990 in rural areas in their mother tongue. Acquiring literacy skills was not obligatory for women. A National Commission for the Eradication of Illiteracy, headed by the Prime Minister, was established and all government institutions and literate masses were called upon to support the literacy campaign.

Experience showed that these objectives were far from being realistic and, in any case could not be implemented, due to country-wide opposition to the regime, and fighting in Afghanistan.

Programmes and Structures

The education system was under the administration of two government agencies: the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education. Both ministries had a number of Soviet advisers and experts in different areas of education, including the planning and management of education, research and curriculum, textbook development, etc. The Ministry of Higher Education was also responsible for technical and vocational education.

Teacher education was reorganized, and the responsibility for teacher training was entrusted to the Ministry of Education. Basic reform was introduced in the structure and content of general education. In 1980 the General Agency for the Literacy Campaign was established. To mobilize the different sectors of society for political and educational objectives, a number of organizations were established or reinforced: Women's Organization; Youths' Organization; Teachers' Association, etc.

The structure of general education (8+4), as established in the reform of education in 1975, was changed to (4+4+2). General education, which was reduced from twelve to ten years, consisted of three levels: primary school (grades one to four), middle school (grades five to eight) and secondary school (grades nine to ten). The curriculum of general education was modified and a number of basic changes were introduced. Religious education in schools was reduced. In addition to Pashto and Dari, efforts were made to use other local ethnic languages (Uzbeki and Turkmeni) in education and literacy work. The Russian language was introduced in schools as the main foreign language. A new subject 'the Fundamentals of Social Science', was added in the secondary school. Throughout the ten years of the general education cycle, science and mathematics were emphasized; two periods per week of practical work were included, which began with the development of basic skills the in primary school, and participation in productive work in the secondary level of education (similar to polytechnic education in the Soviet education system). The department of translation and adaptation of the ministry, and the pedagogical research centre were responsible for the preparation of textbooks and teaching materials. Due to the inadequacy of four years of primary education, in 1986 it was increased to five, and the structure of school education was modified to (5+3+3). The curriculum of ten-year general education, as described in official documents, is shown in Table 17.

Teacher training for primary schools was planned to be conducted in a number of teacher training colleges with a two-year post-secondary programme. These colleges were expected to provide pre-service and in-service training. Teachers for secondary schools were trained at the Kabul Pedagogical Institute (the former Academy for Teacher Educators) which was set up in 1982, and offered a four-year programme leading to a university degree. The Institute had the following departments: mathematics and physics; chemistry and biology; geography, history and social sciences; foreign languages (English and Russian); national languages and literature (Pashto and Dari). The Pedagogical Institute envisaged two other programmes: a) a two-year in-service training programme for the graduates of teacher training colleges, leading to a bachelor's degree in education; b) the two-year programme, which was offered by the former Academy for Teacher Educators for graduate teachers, leading to a master's degree in education. The graduates of this programme were intended to be assigned to teach in training colleges. The Central Institute for the Retraining of Teachers, which was established at Kabul in 1981, organized short in-service training courses for various categories of teachers.

In 1988, access to primary education was available to about twenty per cent of children (seven to twelve age group), which was a decline of ten per cent compared with the enrolment ratio in 1980. At the secondary level, the enrolment ratio in 1988 was estimated to be eight per cent. The government schools were operating mainly in the cities. There was a shortage of male teachers, as fifty-five per cent of primary school teachers and thirty-one per cent of secondary teachers were females. In 1988, the teacher education programme was modified (reverted to the system that existed in the 1970s) and primary teacher training was again conducted in one-year post-secondary courses in nine Primary Teacher Training Colleges. Two-year training for lower secondary teachers was provided in

six Higher Teachers' Training Colleges, which shared the same facilities with primary teacher training colleges. In 1990, a twelve-year structure of general education (6+3+3) was re-established in Afghanistan.

The literacy programme which was organized by the General Agency for the Literacy Campaign envisaged the following courses: general literacy courses for three months; women's literacy courses covering topics on home economics, clothing, sanitation, child care, etc.; the programme for out-of-school children (nine to fourteen years old) was a two-year intensive course, which would allow its graduates to join grade five of primary education; courses designed to teach farmers literacy skills and information concerning agriculture and co-operatives; adult complementary education centres offered courses in general education for women up to grade eight including some vocational skills. The concept of population and demography (family planning) was incorporated in the literacy programme.

The Ministry of Higher Education was responsible for the universities and other institutions of higher education. The University of Kabul was reorganized. The Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Engineering were dissolved (1982). The Polytechnic Institute was made a separate autonomous institution. The Faculty of Medicine of the University of Kabul and related institutions were reorganized as the Kabul Medical Institute and attached to the Ministry of Health. In addition to the University of Nangarhar, which had existed since 1964, three other universities were established during the 1980s in Balkh (1986), Herat (1988) and Kandahar (1991)

The enrolment in institutions of higher education increased at an annual rate of four per cent with a total enrolment of 14,600 students in 1990. Kabul University had about 10,000 students (sixty per cent female) and 620 teachers. A UNESCO consultant who visited some of the universities in April 1991 reported that "all universities lack buildings, funds, equipment and qualified staff. It is difficult to see how such a rapid expansion of higher education can have been accompanied by the maintenance of academic standards... Moreover the departure of large numbers of professors and teachers without a corresponding recruitment of qualified national staff has meant that the teaching is much below the standard of a universally recognized university institution". The Ministry of Higher Education in collaboration with the Soviet experts managed the development of higher education. In addition to plans for the expansion of higher education in Afghanistan, a significant number of Afghan students were admitted to institutions of higher education and technical and vocational training in the USSR. It was reported that about 7,800 Afghan students were in Soviet universities and technical institutions in 1990.

Technical and vocational training was organized by the Ministry of Higher Education as well as a number of other government ministries and agencies. The Ministry of Higher Education had fifteen technical and vocational schools and six Technicums (secondary vocational schools) which were established in the 1980s with the help of the USSR. There was a total enrolment of 12,000 students (1990) and 3,000 graduates annually. According to a report presented to a UN conference on the least developed countries (1990), the enrolment in technical schools was lower compared to 1978; however, admission in technicums doubled from 1,700 students in 1978 to 3,570 students in 1987.

United Nations' Role and Assessment

After negotiations between the USA, the USSR, Pakistan and Afghanistan (Kabul government) in Geneva, under the auspices of the United Nations, an Agreement was signed on

14 April, 1988, providing for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan, the creation of a neutral Afghan State, and the repatriation of millions of Afghan refugees. The USA and the USSR pledged to serve as guarantors of the Agreement. The Soviet military force left Afghanistan in 1989. During this period, the United Nations were involved in both the political transition in Afghanistan as well as humanitarian assistance and reconstruction of the country. The Secretary-General of the United Nations appointed a Coordinator for Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes for the Afghan people. An appeal was made to the international community for assistance to Afghanistan. A number of UN Agencies and donor countries pledged funds and technical support. In the context of the UN programme, several projects were formulated for the development of education services. The experts were beginning to assess the enormous task ahead for the repatriation of Afghan refugees, the provision of social services including education, and the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, launched an appeal on 10 June 1988, on behalf of the people of Afghanistan, for humanitarian and economic assistance. The situation of Afghanistan was described in the AppealDocument in the following terms.

"For a decade now Afghanistan has been the scene of one of the longest and most tragic conflicts in recent human history... Here is a country whose people have suffered death and desolation for a decade. Few families have been unaffected. In addition to the many who died on the battle field, large numbers have become victims of the general breakdown in the nation's infrastructure and services. Countless thousands have been disabled for life. Everywhere there are widows and orphans.

Millions of Afghans, men, women and children, have left their homes and become refugees. The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran reports 2.4 million refugees and that of Pakistan a total of 3.1 million refugees. Several million are thought to have been displaced within the frontiers of Afghanistan. There are hundreds of thousands still bearing the injuries of war... In addition to its human losses, Afghanistan has also suffered extensive damage to all sectors of its economy. The precise dimensions of the tragedy remain to be ascertained. The collapse of the traditional way of life and the clash of mutually exclusive visions of the future have led to a crisis of values that has further deepened the nation's political and economic crisis...

Today there is a strong chance that peace might be restored to Afghanistan. A basic framework for a gradual return to peaceful conditions is already in place. But peace is still but a fragile sapling in Afghanistan: many storms on the horizon threaten it. It needs to be nurtured and protected."

Following the appeal of the United Nations Secretary-General, with the financial assistance of the Japanese Government in October 1989, UNESCO in cooperation with other Agencies of the United Nations initiated a project for the development of basic education in Afghanistan. This project was extended over areas controlled by the mujahidin as well as areas under the Kabul government. The objective of the project was to establish education services at the community level, which met local priorities and needs under the direct administration and supervision of the communities themselves. These services were not restricted to basic education for school-aged children, but also included functional literacy teaching for adults, skills training and technical instruction for young people, health education and the promotion of learning opportunities for women and girls.

The Education Reform in the Final Phase

In 1986 there was a change of leadership in the communist government in Kabul, reflecting the political changes in the USSR and the beginning of détente between East and West. In Afghanistan a strategy of national reconciliation was initiated and a new Constitution adopted in 1988. The State was renamed the Republic of Afghanistan. A few non-party members were brought to the government, and the base of certain consultative institutions such as the parliament was broadened. These measures turned out to be too little and too late. As a result of completely opposing visions of society, sustained suffering and resentment among people, the communist regime ultimately collapsed at the beginning of 1992.

In 1990 efforts were made to reform the education system once again. The structure of education was changed and the Ministry of Education started to revise the curriculum and teacher education. In collaboration with several international organizations such as UNESCO, UNICEF and UNDP, a national seminar was organized to study the reform of education with a view to bringing it closer to the realities of Afghan society and its religious and cultural values. A plan was prepared for the development of basic education for all. A new Ministry of Rehabilitation and Rural Development was established, which organized non-formal education programmes for out-of-school children and literacy courses for adults. The ministry had set up three schools and eleven community training centres in Kabul and seven provinces.

In a report to the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Geneva, 1990), the Kabul government identified the following priorities for the development of education.

"It is estimated that nearly two thousand primary, secondary and vocational schools (nearly two thirds of the total) have been either damaged or abandoned in the past decade. The first priority will be to take an inventory of all schools and launch a programme of repair and reconstruction.... Further, to ensure the success of the education programme in rural areas, the curricula, school times and learning materials will be made relevant to the community environment, value and culture. The local communities and villages, as well as religious leaders, will be associated with the design, planning and implementation of the relevant educational system".

"The second immediate priority will be accorded to training and the deployment of teachers to promote basic education and skills training. Besides organizing crash training programmes for teachers at all levels, the strategy will give high priority to the planning and implementation of a new effective teacher-training programme. The programme will be appropriately revised so as to prepare primary and other school teachers for rural education and community development. The production and efficient distribution of text books and essential educational materials will be emphasized".

"In the longer term, major emphasis will be placed on vocational, technical and higher education. The government has already taken various steps to increase substantially the enrolment of such education. However, the demand for technical and higher skills in various fields of economic activity far exceeds the available supply. This shortage is a major cause of low productivity and efficiency in both the agricultural and industrial sectors. Since 1978/79, a large number of professionals and skilled technicians has left the country. While it may be difficult to attract most of them back to Afghanistan, a suitable environment will be created to retain most of the skilled workers and professionals now being trained in the country".

"The government has for many years promoted adult literacy, but success in this area has been much below expectation. Henceforth, emphasis will be placed on functional literacy programmes and the focus will be on topics of direct interest to the beneficiaries, e.g. farm productivity, management and the operation of small-scale industries and handicrafts, home economics and kitchen gardening for women, first aid training, midwife training, etc. Such programmes may also contribute to raising the consciousness of parents concerning their daughters' education.... ".

Table 17

The Curriculum of General Education
(Periods per Week)

Subjects	*Grades*									
	I	*II*	*III*	*IV*	*V*	*VI*	*VII*	*VIII*	*IX*	*X*
Theology	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2		
Native Language	12	12	10	10	4	4	4	3	1	1
Literature					3	3	3	4	4	2
Pashto / Dari					2	2	2	2	2	2
Mathematics	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
History				2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Social Sciences									1	2
Nature Study			2	2						
Geography					2	3	2	2	2	
Physics & Astronomy						3	3	2	4	6
Chemistry							2	2	2	3
Biology					2	2	2	2	2	2
Technical Drawing							1	1	1	
Foreign Language					3	2	2	3	3	4
Music & Arts	2	2	2	2	2	2				
Physical Education	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3
Skills Development & Productive Work	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Total	**25**	**25**	**25**	**27**	**32**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**	**35**

Official Curriculum (1980)

Table 18

The Decline of Primary Education in Afghanistan
(1978 - 1990)

Region	No. of Schools			No. of Teachers			No. of Students		
	1978	1990	dec.(%)	1978	1990	dec. (%)	1978	1990	dec.(%)
North East	520	81	(84)	3,667	967	(74)	123,474	59,777	(52)
North	550	138	(75)	3,031	2,038	(33)	129,595	81,069	(37)
West	333	95	(71)	2,938	926	(68)	83,548	57,224	(32)
East Central	237	8	(97)	1,022	73	(93)	34,230	6,872	(80)
Central	503	87	(83)	10,032	9,466	(8)	349,570	349,671	(0)
East	356	93	(74)	3,344	865	(74)	97,686	22,963	(76)
South	330	44	(87)	2,891	251	(91)	84,633	17,929	(79)
South West	523	40	(92)	2,708	520	(81)	92,917	27,008	(71)
Total	**3,352**	**586**	**(83)**	**29,907**	**15,106**	**(49)**	**995,653**	**622,513**	**(59)**

dec. (%) = per cent decrease

North East:	Kunduz, Baghlan, Takhar and Badakhshan
North:	Balkh, Samangan, Jawzjan and Faryab
West:	Herat, Badghis and Farah
East Central:	Bamyan and Ghor
Central:	Kabul, Parwan, Kapisa, Logar and Wardak
East:	Nangarhar, Laghman and Kunar
South:	Paktia, Paktika and Ghazni
South West:	Kandahar, Helmand, Zabul, Oruzgan and Nimroz

IV

Education in the Islamic State of Afghanistan

When the mujahidin entered Kabul in April 1992, and established the Islamic State of Afghanistan, most of the infrastructure for education in large areas of the countryside had collapsed, as a result of fighting and the exodus of people from rural areas. About two thousand schools were damaged or destroyed. Thousands of teachers were either victims of the war or had left Afghanistan. There were serious shortages of textbooks and basic equipment and teaching materials. The communist regime was running schools and training institutions in Kabul and provincial centres. In 1991, there were 577 primary schools with an enrolment of 628,000 pupils including 212,000 girls. Enrolments in secondary education and higher education were 182,000 and 24,000 respectively, including 7600 students at the University of Kabul.

The UN-sponsored Peace Agreement (1988) envisaged a transitional government for Afghanistan. However the Afghan resistance groups (mujahidin) who fought the communist power decided to form the government themselves. Thus the government of the mujahidin, which was composed of leaders of different resistance parties and ethnic groups headed by Professor S. Mojadidi, assumed the historic responsibility for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan. In the absence of a Constitution and any political structures, as well as divisions between the different ethnic leaders, the government did not function effectively and, unfortunately, the long-awaited peace and tranquillity did not prevail in Afghanistan. The international community and the United Nations, which had initiated an action plan for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan, were disappointed to witness the continuation of fighting in the country.

Education Policy and Strategy

The Islamic State of Afghanistan had the enormous task of building an education system. The government did not have a national education policy and lacked the necessary expertise and resources for educational development. From the outset it was clear that the Islamic and cultural aspects of educational programmes would be strengthened; and any educational programme reflecting the communist education system or ideology would be discontinued. It should be mentioned that during the last years of the communist regime, the government made efforts to bring education closer to Afghanistan's cultural and religious heritage. In fact, from 1990, a programme of basic education was initiated in cooperation with local communities. The Islamic State of Afghanistan emphasized the importance of basic education and the eradication of adult illiteracy as well as the training of manpower for reconstruction.

In October 1991, following three years of the United Nations humanitarian assistance programme to Afghanistan, there was a major programme review exercise which brought together key staff of all the participating agencies of the United Nations system. There was also extensive consultation with non-governmental organizations and other partners involved in humanitarian work with Afghan refugees in the camps, and in the rural areas inside Afghanistan. After careful analysis of the situation which confronted the international community, a strategy and programme outline was agreed, which included the development of basic education. In a UN document 'Operation Salam' (programme for 1992), the justification and strategy for basic education was stated in the following terms: basic education, with its emphasis on teaching skills for life in the community, had a sufficiently universal relevance that valuable work could be undertaken in Afghanistan without the difficulties which might confront a more conventional approach. The inputs required for getting Basic Education off the ground is modest. If the community can identify a trusted individual as a 'community representative' or 'social animator' and others as teachers of life skills, these people will need a modest degree of training and support, and some assistance with the supply of basic materials and equipment. Clusters of such local initiatives can then be brought together into networks of like-minded groups, which will increasingly be able to fulfil each other's needs. For example, one Basic Education Centre might concentrate on carpentry skills; another Centre might specialize in vegetable gardening, and so on.

It should be mentioned that the priorities of the government and the international community were for basic needs such as water, food, shelter, health services etc. Educational development did not have high priority for external assistance. In fact, under the United Nations Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programme (Operation Salam), Basic Education was not included as a priority sector until 1992 (together with Agriculture, Food Aid, Mine Clearance, Health and Voluntary Repatriation). According to a UNDP report (Kabul, 1996), less than five per cent of the sectorial spending of UN Agencies between 1994 and 1996 was related to educational activities. Among UN agencies, UNESCO (as the lead agency for education), UNICEF, UNDP., WHO, ILO, the World Food Programme, and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, as well as a number of international non-governmental organizations, were involved in education and training programmes.

Efforts for Educational Development

In the early 1990s, UNESCO and several international non-governmental organizations assisted the local communities in the organization of basic education services in rural areas. A large number of primary schools were supported by non-governmental organizations through the provision of textbooks, teacher training and the payment of teachers' salaries. UNESCO assisted in the establishment of five Village Basic Education Centres in the provinces of Farah, Ghazni and Wardak; nineteen tent schools were established for primary shcools and other community activities in the provinces of Ghazni, Kandahar, Paktia and Wardak. These schools were supplied with essential equipment. About five hundred basic education instructors and animators were trained. In 1993, a total of 684,000 children including 74,670 girls (eleven per cent) were enrolled in 2,250 primary schools in Afghanistan. The number of teaching staff was 23,000 including 7,500 female teachers.

An innovative approach to the development of basic education was adopted in the skills training programmes established in the fields of carpet and silk weaving and natural

dye-making. These courses were organized by Afghan non-governmental organizations and intended to furnish returned refugees with income-earning skills, to preserve the nation's cultural heritage and to provide obligatory literacy and numeracy instruction as well as health education. Almost one hundred weavers and dyers were trained in a series of workshops in Mazar-i-Sharif and Herat and there were almost immediate benefits in employment and a commitment to become literate and numerate. The UNESCO consultants in cooperation with other UN agencies, such as the World Food Programme, UNHCR and non-governmental organizations assisted in the implementation of this project.

The development of appropriate reading materials was essential for basic education programmes. Many non-governmental organizations including the Education Centre for Afghanistan, the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan and Muslim Aid, developed curricula and produced textbooks for primary schools. In the absence of an agreed curriculum, UNESCO focused on producing reading materials required by a variety of learners who participated in programmes designed to extend education to all. Among the readers published were 'Facts for Life' in Dari and Pashto, a book prepared by UNESCO, WHO and UNICEF, and used in health education programmes; other readers were produced on carpet making, silk weaving and the preparation of natural dyes. A handbook on building and another on conflict resolution were also prepared. Reading materials also included more than fifty issues of a comic strip magazine as well as charts and posters. Private publishing firms produced these reading materials, with good quality printing and colourful illustrations.

Distance education was considered an important strategy for the promotion of basic education in Afghanistan. A UNESCO consultant made a feasibility study on the use of the radio in the education of Afghans (young and old) in November 1991. In his report, the consultant recommended that broadcasting relevant educational programmes, supplemented by appropriate reading materials, would be one of the most effective and economical means of providing essential educational messages for the Afghan population. Regarding listening habits in Afghanistan, the report stated:

"From several audience research surveys, it is known that radio listening by Afghan refugees in Pakistan is amongst the highest in the world. According to a 1988 survey, sixty-three per cent of the refugee population listened to the BBC every day... Voice of America scoring more than fifty per cent of the audience as regular listeners. A significant figure in the BBC results was the number of women listeners, forty-six per cent. There is a tradition of radio listening in the country. Radio Afghanistan's records show that over two million radio receivers have been imported into the country since 1965. Another important point to consider is the nature of radio listening in Afghanistan. The strongly oral tradition of learning in the country lends itself to a process of remembering the details of radio broadcasts with little or no support from written material. A further feature of radio listening in Afghanistan is that it often takes place in groups, either of families or of men. This provides potentially fertile ground on which to build listening groups or clubs, and to foster a culture of self-reliance".

Following the survey on feasibility and the effectiveness of the radio in the context of Afghanistan, a project was undertaken in 1993 by UNESCO, in collaboration with the BBC, to use broadcasting as a means of extending learning opportunities to as many people (children, youth and adults) as possible. A 'soap opera' approach was used, combining the sending of educational messages with entertainment in the form of a family drama. A team of one hundred and forty Afghan actors, producers, scriptwriters and administrators was trained. A consultative committee of Afghans and specialists from UN agencies and

Introduction

This document has been prepared with three objectives in mind: firstly, to present a condensed historical record of modern education in Afghanistan which would be of interest to education scholars; secondly, the analysis of education in Afghan society provides an insight into the complex dynamics of education, tradition, society and government, whose understanding would contribute to effective policies for educational development; thirdly, based on world-wide reflections on education for the twenty-first century, and the context and educational experiences of Afghan society, future education policies and strategies for Afghanistan are considered.

The document reflects the experience of Afghanistan, as a traditional multi-ethnic developing country, with its attempts for modernization of education and the set- backs in providing access to education, as well as the contribution of the international community to the development of education. The role of families, local communities and enlightened leaders and governments has been essential for the development of education. The expansion of education in the 1960s and 1970s showed that, under conditions of peace and tranquillity and with appropriate education policies, a modern education system, with equal access and opportunities for all, could be developed in the context of national values and heritage. There is no contradiction between Afghan cultural values and modernity.

The conflict during the last two decades had a devastating effect on Afghan society, and its social and economic infrastructure including education. In the year 2000, enrolment in primary education barely reached the level of 1978 (less than thirty percent), with the percentage of girls significantly reduced. There is some secondary education, but there is no significant technical and vocational or higher education in the country. Despite the tragic war, Afghans inside Afghanistan and as refugees outside the country, in conditions of poverty and despair, showed a keen interest in the education of their children. Local communities and non-governmental organizations (with financial support from donor countries and UN Agencies) played an important role in sustaining basic education for Afghans in rural communities and refugee camps. Reviewing the prospects for educational development in Afghanistan, a recent UNESCO report concluded that the strong and growing demand for modern education for boys and girls, and the willingness of the community to participate are the key to the future.

This document has five chapters. The first chapter considers the historical, socio-cultural, economic and political influences, as well as the impact of the international community on the development of education in Afghanistan. Chapter two deals with the development of modern education during the twentieth century until the 1978 communist coup d'etat, and the establishment of the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan. It traces the edu-

non-governmental organizations met regularly to work out story lines and to determine the educational messages to be transmitted. A series entitled 'New Home, New Life' was produced in Pashto and Dari. The first broadcasts were sent out in April 1994. Over four hundred episodes were produced by October 1996. The themes covered by the radio series included health care, drug abuse, mine awareness, conflict resolution, land disputes, farming advice, veterinary care, etc. Based on the soap opera, a monthly magazine was also published to be used as simple reading materials for new literates. Following the success of this programme, in 1996 a second programme (BBC/Reach) was envisaged with the support of UNICEF and a non-governmental organization for the education of young people.

In 1994, the UNESCO office in Islamabad proposed a project for basic education entitled 'Grassroots Reconstruction of Education for Afghanistan', its objective was to develop the professional capacity of education personnel. In collaboration with Afghan specialists and two non-governmental organizations (supported by Germany and Belgium), guidelines and sample materials were prepared in Dari and Pashto in three key areas: the management of primary schools under stress; functional literacy, skill development and income generating activities; and multi-grade teaching at the primary level of education. In producing the educational materials, a research-based approach was adopted focusing on specific issues confronting key personnel including teachers in schools. Some training activities were carried out for selected groups of key education personnel in Kabul, Mazar-i-Sharif, Herat, Bamyan, Jalalabad and Kandahar.

According to a report of the Ministry of Education, in 1994/95 there were 628,660 children including 168,820 girls with 11,548 teachers (6,662 females) in primary schools in Afghanistan; enrolment in secondary education (grades seven to twelve) was 282,340 students including 85,692 girls with 5,926 male and 6,522 female teachers. About 200,000 students were in the Kabul area. A total of 5,300 male and female students were being trained in twelve teacher training colleges. The report made no reference to the existence of any significant technical and vocational training. There were serious shortages of textbooks, educational supplies, furniture and equipment as well as qualified teachers. About sixty per cent of educational buildings in Kabul and seventy-five per cent in the provinces were damaged. The government lacked the financial and technical resources to rehabilitate the educational institutions. Teachers' salaries in some areas could not be paid. A number of non-governmental organizations provided support for educational activities in Afghanistan, especially in the provincial and rural areas.

In 1995, Nancy Dupree, the head of a documentation centre on Afghanistan based at Peshawar, made a survey of Afghan higher educational institutions. There were a total of 10,700 students registered (7,700 male and 3,000 female) in institutions of higher education in Afghanistan as follows:

1. University of Kabul: 4,169 students (2,818 men and 1,351 women) in faculties of agriculture, medicine and veterinary medicine, science, geology, economics, education, fine arts, letters, political science, sociology, Islamic law and Islamic studies.
2. Islamic University of Nangarhar: 1,300 students (1,270 men and 30 women) in faculties of agriculture, veterinary medicine, engineering, economics, letters, law and Islamic studies.
3. University of Balkh: 3,760 students (2,590 men and 1,170 women) in faculties of agriculture, engineering, economics, medicine, history and literature, law and Islamic studies.
4. University of Herat: 480 students (340 men and 140 women) in faculties of agriculture, medicine, engineering, economics, education, literature, arts and Islamic studies.

5. University of Kandahar: 180 students (165 men and 15 women) in the Faculty of Medicine.
6. University of Ummahat-ul-Momineed (Muslim Sisters): 250 women students. This university was established exclusively for women in Peshawar, under the auspices of Jamaite Islami, and it was transferred to Kabul in 1995. It offered courses in medicine, science, education, letters and Islamic studies.

According to reports these universities were operating under extremely difficult conditions, as most of the buildings were damaged, and basic facilities including laboratories and libraries and qualified teaching staff were lacking. Furthermore, due to fighting and the security situation, the University of Kabul and other institutions of higher education were frequently closed during much of the 1990s and did not function effectively.

The development of education in Afghanistan during the 1990s was hampered by continued fighting among different political and ethnic factions in all regions of the country. There was damage and insecurity in the city of Kabul and provincial cities affecting educational development. The population including pupils and teachers were continually displaced. Some people including teachers took refuge outside the country. Schooling and other educational activities were only possible within certain areas, under the control of one political faction or ethnic group, with limited facilities such as teachers and textbooks. There was no national policy or unified curriculum in the country. The international community and the UN agencies and non-governmental organizations faced difficulties in providing support for educational development in Afghanistan.

Arrival of the Taliban

As a result of rivalries among the leaders of different ethnic factions in the government and continued fighting, the government of the Islamic State of Afghanistan did not function. In November 1994, a new political force called the Taliban (religious students), which was composed of ethnic Pashtuns and supported by Pakistan, moved into Afghanistan (initially in Kandahar, then Herat (1995) and in September 1996 in Kabul). The government in Kabul tried to resist the Taliban without success. By 1997 more than two-thirds of the country was controlled by the Taliban. The United Nations made many attempts to find a solution to the Afghan conflict and reconcile the Taliban with the opposition groups. However, after four years and at the dawn of the twenty-first century, there is still no solution in sight. The Taliban now govern most of the country (de facto) and a small part is under the control of the opposition groups, called the Northern Alliance. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of Afghanistan, including the development of a national education system, have been seriously affected due to the prevailing security and political situation.

A recent report of the UN Security Council on "The Situation of Afghanistan" (S/2000/581) makes the following observation: "The situation of Afghan people remains deplorable... More than twenty years after the invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, and the billions of dollars expended to feed successive war efforts, Afghanistan remains in a state of acute crisis – its resources depleted, its intelligentsia in exile, its people disfranchised, its traditional political structures shattered and its human development indices among the lowest in the world". "What is now needed is for a process of dialogue to be structured among Afghans, while at the same time fostering a common understanding among those governments that are engaged in Afghanistan, based on the acknowledgement that their legitimate interests can be guaranteed in the context of an overall peace settlement. Such a settlement

must have as its twin objectives the establishment of a broadly based, unified government respectful of Afghanistan's ethnic diversity and mutual commitments between Afghanistan and its neighbours based on the principle of non-interference and friendly relations".

The social, economic and cultural policy of the Taliban has been based on the application of a strict Islamic law (Sharia). In the field of education, with the arrival of the Taliban the girls' schools were closed in Kabul and other areas under their control. The international community has criticized this policy which is contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education and a number of other international instruments. In 1990, the proportion of girls in primary education was thirty-four per cent; in 1999, girls constituted only seven per cent of the enrolment in primary schools and basic education centres, which were supported mainly by non-governmental organizations. Several organizations have refused to support educational activities in those areas of Afghanistan where girls do not have equal access to education as boys. The external aid-giving agencies and organizations searched new ways and means to promote the education of girls, by supporting home schools and special community structures in the rural areas for the education and training of girls and women.

According to a report of the UN Commission for Human Rights, dated February 2000, the education sector in Afghanistan is characterized by "limited human and financial resources, the absence of a national education policy and curricula for primary and secondary education and the incapacity of the authorities to rehabilitate destroyed school buildings and facilities". In the areas controlled by the Taliban, "discriminatory policies of denying access to girls at all levels of education are continued". UNICEF, taking the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) as the guiding principle, continues to express its disagreement with the official education policy of the Taliban, which discriminates against girls and women. This Convention was ratified unanimously by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 and Afghanistan became a signatory to the CRC in 1990.

The Role of Non-governmental Organizations

The non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are non-profit bodies that have concentrated their resources on humanitarian and community-based programmes, supplementing national and governmental structures. The strength of the NGOs lies in their implementing capacity at the local level. Experience has shown that the NGOs contributed significantly to the promotion of basic education for Afghan refugees as well as in rural communities inside Afghanistan. In 1988-91 the NGOs were supporting 1,844 schools (out of a total of 2,433 schools) in twenty-nine provinces inside Afghanistan. In 1999 non-governmental organizations assisted seven hundred primary schools, for boys and mostly for girls, in twenty-two provinces. In addition, a number of basic education centres for young people and adults, men and women, were supported. The NGOs are funded by governmental and private sources and coordinate their activities through mechanisms such as ACBAR (the Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief), based in Peshawar.

According to the study prepared by a UNICEF consultant in 1988, there were over twenty organizations involved in supporting basic education for Afghans. While the majority of these organizations were assisting the schools for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, eight organizations invested the bulk of their resources in cross-border activities through a varied programme of education and training. Three organizations identified primary education as their main sector of interest. Most of the organizations that were active in cross-border educational activities cooperated with local commanders, who were responsible for hir-

ing teachers and overseeing the schools. The major organizations involved in primary education recommended the time-table and specific textbooks for the schools they were funding.

In 1988, there were 181,655 students with 2,974 teachers in 1,490 primary schools inside Afghanistan, supported by eight non-governmental organizations. The three organizations with the largest cross-border programmes were the Afghanistan Education Committee (AEC), supported by Sweden, with 357 schools; the Education Centre for Afghanistan/ University of Nebraska (ECA/UNO) with 636 schools; and Muslim Aid with 271 schools. The AEC worked through a designated education supervisor usually named by the commander of the area. Generally, a package of books, supplies and salaries was given for a three-month period. Muslim Aid relied entirely on its own staff, who went inside Afghanistan to deliver books, supplies and salaries. The University of Nebraska (supported by USAID) established the Education Centre for Afghanistan (ECA) in 1986, and tried to build it as an institution undertaking a range of activities in primary education and literacy training. The ECA had a staff of fifty-four in Peshawar and twenty-four in Quetta. In addition, there were forty-two monitors and a hundred and ninety-one district supervisors who were permanently based inside Afghanistan.

It should be mentioned that the Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (SCA) has provided humanitarian support including education for Afghan people for nearly twenty years. In 1999/2000, it provided support for 562 schools with a total enrolment of 170,925 students, including 35,246 girls, and 5,811 teachers (815 females) in twenty provinces. It has delivered 52,000 books for 300 school libraries. SCA has also conducted in-service teacher training as well as adult literacy courses. Three regional education management centres, one each in Jalalabad, Ghazni and Taloqan with nine programme staff and fifty-two school consultants, provided support to the schools and other educational activities. The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan was considering support for the community-based secondary education that parents have started on their own initiative. According to a survey, there were sixty-six NGO-supported secondary schools, and a hundred and forty-one secondary schools managed by parents' groups, which were attached to SCA-supported primary schools. The number of students in these secondary schools (which were not supported by the government) was estimated to be 30,000.

Another organization that made a significant contribution to the provision of education services to Afghan children was the University of Nebraska, Omaha (UNO), which executed an education sector support project (ESSP) inside Afghanistan, and for Afghan refugees in Pakistan, under a contract with the USAID (1986-1994). The main focus of the project was the development of primary education (curriculum, textbooks, and teaching aids and teacher training). The ESSP programme activities were implemented through the Education Centre for Afghanistan (ECA). The UNO/ECA developed textbooks and teachers' guides in Dari and Pashto for all subjects in grades one to nine and textbooks for some subjects in secondary level grades. A total of fifteen million textbooks were distributed to 1,606 primary schools inside Afghanistan and 1,031 primary schools for Afghan refugees in Pakistan. In-service training was provided for 3,690 classroom teachers, including more than 600 women.

The University of Nebraska also developed a home/family literacy book, teaching guide, and reading pamphlets along with eight adult literacy supplementary reading books on health and nutrition. Ten pilot adult literacy home-based schools for women, and three pilot primary home-based schools for girls and boys, were established in Pakistan. From 1987 to 1992, literacy courses were organized for some 43,690 Afghans. A manpower-train-

ing programme in basic skills for employment was developed in six training centres (four in Pakistan and two inside Afghanistan), in which 2,059 Afghan students participated.

Muslim Aid, a non-governmental organization supported by several countries, had significant cross-border educational activities inside Afghanistan during the 1980s. In 1988, Muslim Aid supported 271 primary schools, with 29,713 students and 899 teachers in Afghanistan. Other non-governmental organizations with significant support for primary education inside Afghanistan were: Medicins Sans Frontieres (54 schools), the Norwegian Committee for Afghanistan (42 schools), the Islamic Relief Agency (18 schools).

The Franco-Afghan Friendship Association (AFRANE) was established in 1980 to provide humanitarian aid for Afghans inside Afghanistan and in the refugee camps in Pakistan. In the 1980s AFRANE was supporting some eighty schools inside Afghanistan. In the 1990s, AFRANE continued to support educational activities for Afghans including two secondary schools in Kabul, Istiqlal for boys, and Malalai for girls (which was closed by the Taliban in 1996), and the French Department of the University of Kabul as well as the Franco-Afghan lycee of Peshawar for Afghan refugees. It has also assisted an educational project in the province of Bamyan (Hazarajat) and schools in Jalalabad and Charikar. As girls' schools were closed in Kabul, since 1998 AFRANE has supported a number of 'home-schools' for girls. Another non-governmental organization, Solidarite Afghanistan-Belgium (SAB) established in 1984, supported schools through teacher training programmes in the refugee camps and inside Afghanistan. With the help of a mobile team of education specialists, SAB trained teachers in both government and NGO-supported schools in nine provinces.

In a document prepared by UNESCO in 2000, it was reported that thirty-four NGOs/Agencies were supporting 1,264 primary schools and basic education centres in about twenty provinces in Afghanistan. In 1999/2000, these schools employed (1,070) teachers and provided education for 112,115 children including 21,314 girls. The agencies and organizations conduct a wide variety of educational programmes, both formal as well as non-formal. These programmes cover all aspects of educational services including teacher training, the development and distribution of textbooks, literacy education, teaching of the recitation of Holy Quran; training in computer and English language. They seek to cater to the needs of children, out-of-school youth, women, etc. In view of the restrictions imposed on the schooling of girls during the last few years, the NGOs have supported home-based schools for girls, which were initiated by parents and communities.

The UNESCO document indicated that the following five organizations were providing support to eighty-seven per cent of the schools and non-formal education centres: The Swedish Committee for Afghanistan (617 schools and centres), CARE (230 schools), The Afghan Development Association (107 schools), Afghan German Basic Education (80 schools and centres) and Surveying Emergency Relief and Vocational Enterprise (70 schools and centres). Six organizations were supporting between ten to twenty-six schools/centres each, and fourteen organizations were assisting a total of fifty-six schools and non-formal education centres. Out of 1,067 primary schools, there were 330 mixed schools and 77 schools for girls. There were 95 mixed non-formal education centres, 46 centres for females and 53 centres for males, including three centres for construction and rehabilitation, three centres for the handicapped and four centres for crafts and industry.

According to a UN report (Feb. 2000), education in Afghanistan is provided in public schools (religious and secular) and other educational structures. About seven per cent of 4.4 million children of primary school age attended educational programmes financed by external organizations, especially in rural areas. These organizations followed different

strategies to reach both boys and girls. They provided subvention not only to official schools, but also to private educational institutions functioning in rural communities and schools organized in private homes in the urban centres. UNICEF and other organizations were considering support for two multi-media projects through the radio developed by the BBC: BBC/Reach, which is an educational broadcast for young Afghans and BBC/AEP (a radio programme for information and education for the Afghan public). The UN report points out that the consecutive 'brain drain', through immigration in the neighbouring countries, has reduced the number of teachers available in Afghanistan.

In a strategy paper on 'Education for Afghans' prepared by UNICEF and Save the Children (USA) in 1998, three categories of issues were identified for the assistance community: a) contextual – the conditions of the Afghan situation which determine the limits of what can be done; b) operational – the policies and funding constraints that affect the ability of agencies to carry out their initiatives; and c) technical – the capacities and approaches of the assistance community required to realize an effective and efficient education programme. The paper recommends a substantial improvement in the access and quality of education, and an increased capacity to develop and maintain the education system. In order to improve access, the following suggestions have been made: the provision of 'packaged' programmes to include materials, training, supervision and assessment; the provision of low-cost materials; the development of flexible alternative delivery systems to meet the needs of urban and rural communities (home schools, community-based initiatives, interactive radio and mobile training units and mosque schools).

With regard to programme quality, the strategy paper underlines the importance of the quality of textbooks, teacher training and supervision. In addition to quality and access, it is recommended that the aid agencies should strengthen their technical and delivery capacities, and increase the involvement of Afghans in education sector activities. Afghan organizations need to improve their links with Afghan communities, as well as their management capacities. The international agencies need to increase their own educational expertise and support for non-governmental organizations and Afghan formal education structures. While the short-term aim of international assistance to education should be to develop and test effective education models, in the long-term the international community should aim to deliver tested models efficiently and effectively to all Afghan children.

Education of Afghan Refugees

After the coup d'etat of 1978, and the formation of a communist government in Afghanistan, a significant portion of the Afghan population left the country and took refuge in neighbouring countries. The exodus began in 1979 and by the early 1980s about six million Afghan refugees were living in Pakistan and Iran, approximately three million people in each country. The UNHCR and other UN Agencies and a number of non-governmental organizations, in cooperation with the host countries, provided humanitarian services for Afghan refugees in camps, villages and towns, including education and training. Following the establishment of the Islamic State of Afghanistan in 1992, large numbers of refugees returned or were repatriated to the country. According to statistics published by the UNHCR, in 1997 there were still 1.4 million Afghan refugees in Iran and 1.2 million in Pakistan. The majority of Afghan refugees in Pakistan are Pashto-speaking and live in camps, villages and settlements The Afghan refugees in Iran are predominantly Dari-speaking and live in urban areas.

Primary education for Afghan refugees in Pakistan has been organized in the camps

in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), and in Baluchistan. The Commissionerate for Afghan Refugees was technically responsible for all schools in the camps. In 1988, there were 472 primary schools, 145 middle schools and three secondary schools for Afghan refugees in NWFP. Seventy-six of these schools were for girls with a total enrolment of 7,168 students. Enrolment in the primary grades of boys' schools was 94,427 and there were 3,014 teachers (two-thirds Afghans). The medium of instruction in all primary schools was Pashto. In Baluchistan, there were one hundred primary schools and forty-five middle schools. Twelve primary schools were for girls, with a total enrolment of 666. Enrolment in the boys' primary and middle schools was 13,986. Seven schools operated in the Dari language, while all the others were Pashto-medium. There were 480 teachers, nearly all Afghan.

In the 1980s and early 1990s, the Afghan political parties (mujahidin) had education departments that were responsible for organizing educational and training activities for refugees in Pakistan. The mujahidin organized their own schools and had altogether five to six hundred schools. Some parties such as the Jamiyat and Hizb-e-Islami had more schools than the other groups. The Afghan political parties supported both religious and secular schools, although religion has been an important part of the programme in secular schools as well. One party (Itehad Islami) supported mostly religious schools. All the seven parties of the Alliance had support from various NGOs including the University of Nebraska (UNO) for some of their schools. This support ranged from the complete funding of a school to the provision of books and supplies. Some teacher training was also offered. The Alliance was composed of seven political parties of mujahidin (tanzeems).

A project on basic education (BEFARe) was set up by the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in 1984, with the aim of providing educational assistance to Afghan refugees in Pakistan. The project covered both formal and non-formal education and focused on curriculum and textbook development for primary schools and teacher training. BEFARe continued to work closely with UNHCR and the Commissionerate for Afghan refugees, throughout the 1990s, to support schools in refugee camps in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan. In 1996, BEFARe assumed responsibility for running the UNHCR-supported primary schools for Afghan refugees in the NWFP, in anticipation of UNHCR phasing out its assistance for the camp schools. It was expected (hoped by UNHCR) that a significant number of Afghan refugees would be repatriated to Afghanistan, and that in the meantime, the refugee community in the camps would support these schools. Experience has shown that this assumption was unrealistic. In 1998, BEFARe and UNHCR were responsible for 274 schools in the camps with 80,650 pupils and 1,880 teachers. In the area of non-formal education, 76,500 Afghan refugees attended the courses, organized by BEFARe, on mother and child health; a total of 49,300 male and female adults and adolescents completed the literacy, home school and out-of-school courses. In 1994, BEFARe established an Afghan non-governmental organization (Afghan-German Basic education) for cross-border educational activities (rehabilitation) inside Afghanistan. Regional pilot centres were established in Nangarhar, Laghman, Kunar and Khost.

Afghan refugee children and youth in Iran were allowed to join public primary and secondary schools, according to the rules and regulations of the Ministry of Education, provided the refugees were registered. The government policy regarding the registration of Afghan refugees, arriving after 1992 changed, and made access to public services including education more restricted. According to government statistics, only nineteen per cent of Afghan refugees, who arrived in Iran after 1979, were literate. By 1992, the rate had

increased to forty-one point four per cent. During 1989-1992, of more than 600,000 children and young people of school age (seven to nineteen) only one third had enrolled in schools. In 1992 the number of Afghan pupils in Iranian schools (primary and secondary) was 90,477 comprising 56,870 males and 33,607 females. In 1998 the enrolment of Afghans was 113,195 pupils (51,980 males and 61,227 females), reflecting an increase in the number of girls. A small portion of Afghan refugees in Iran live in camps (five per cent) and about 3,000 students attend schools established by the government in the camps. There were also forty private Afghan schools in Teheran with a total enrolment of 5,600 students. According to a recent study about half of the Afghan refugee population (one and a half million in 1998) are estimated to be under the age of fifteen, the majority of whom were born in Iran. Many of these children were not registered, due to administrative formalities, and had difficulty in going to public schools. It has been reported that from an estimated total of 500,000 registered Afghan children in Iran (aged six to fifteen), there were 154,600 children in school.

The host government funded the education of Afghan refugees in Iran. In the 1990s, UNHCR and some non-governmental organizations also supported the education of Afghan refugees in Iran. The UNHCR provided financial assistance for the government for the provision of textbooks, equipment and educational supplies, and the construction or improvement of primary schools in refugee rural settlements, and in marginal urban areas. Literacy training was provided by the Literacy Movement Organization in the refugee camps. Since 1996 libraries have been established for children and young adults in fifteen refugee camps. In 1997, through a pilot project, pre-school centres were established in four camps for about one thousand refugee children. The UNHCR cooperates with the United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA) and UNICEF in the areas of health and education and in school-based projects for the promotion of the rights of refugee children.

In May 1999, a symposium was organized in Teheran on the needs of Afghan refugees by non-governmental organizations and several UN Agencies, with the participation of the government departments concerned. Based on the discussion in the symposium, UNICEF, UNHCR, UNESCO and the NGOs made the following recommendations: a) access to basic education for all – access must be the most fundamental starting point of the education strategy for the refugees. A large number of Afghan children in Iran is currently without any basic education or opportunities to learn skills or professions. Efforts should be made to improve access to basic education for Afghan children. b) curriculum for repatriation – as many hundreds of thousands of Afghan refugees will be repatriated over the next few years, urgent attention needs to be given to their educational and cultural needs for reintegration (such as the history and geography of Afghanistan, the teaching of Pashto, technical and skills training, life skills, etc.).

It was also recommended to promote teacher training in the special needs of Afghan refugees; for agencies and non-governmental organizations to coordinate their education policies for Afghans in Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan.

The opportunities for Afghan refugees in post-secondary and higher education in Iran and Pakistan were limited. According to UNHCR reports, a small number of Afghan refugees, not exceeding a few hundred, have had access to higher educational facilities in Iran (in 1994 there were two hundred and forty-two Afghan refugees enrolled in Iranian universities). In Pakistan, a limited number of Afghans were able to pursue higher education in private institutions (supported by Afghans and NGOs) and government universities. In a recent UNHCR report (May 2000), it has been stated that "there are considerable barriers to Afghan refugees' access to tertiary education in Pakistani institutions, most of which

impose very strict quotas for admission, with very few places for refugee students". In 1998 the government closed five small Afghan post-secondary colleges. In April 1999, the Afghan community formed the Afghan University in Peshawar (1,511 male and 518 female students with about two-thirds in the Faculty of Medicine). The Afghan University lacks basic teaching and physical facilities, and needs to be supported by Afghans and the international community. Among donor countries, Germany has promoted higher education for Afghan refugees. Since 1993, it has funded a scholarship programme, administered by UNHCR, for needy and deserving young refugees (under this scheme, about one thousand Afghan students are currently studying at universities in fifty-two countries). Other countries and Agencies that have shown interest in scholarships for Afghan refugees include Canada, the USA, and the World Bank.

Curriculum and Textbook Development

The curricula and textbooks developed during the 1980s for use in schools for Afghan refugees in Pakistan were studied by a UNICEF consultant in 1988. There was no unified curriculum for Afghan children. At least five different curricula (subjects

and timetable) in primary schools were used by various organizations. The subjects and weekly time allocation in the curriculum (Table 19) developed by the following four organizations were similar: Muslim Aid, The Islamic Relief Agency, The Education Centre for Afghanistan and The Afghanistan Education Committee. While Pashto and Dari were taught in all schools supported by these four organizations, the schools run by the Commissionerate taught Pashto, Urdu and English (Table 20). The Arabic language was included in the schools sponsored by the Islamic Relief Agency and Muslim Aid. The range and percentage of time allocation for different groups of subjects in primary education were: Religion (32-42 %), Pashto/Dari (26-32 %), Science/Math (16-27 %) Social studies (4 -7 %).

A number of different sets of textbooks were produced for primary education during the 1980s. Most of these were based on Afghan textbooks developed by the Ministry of Education in the 1960s and 1970s. Some of these textbooks appeared to be similar in layout and organization, particularly for reading and mathematics in the early grades. Religious education has been important in all primary education curricula. The books produced by the Education Centre for Afghanistan (ECA) were distributed to schools inside Afghanistan up to the sixth grade by 1989. An advisory board that included one representative from each of the seven political parties belonging to the Alliance reviewed all these books. The Alliance Education Council prepared books for grades one through twelve by a group of Afghan educators. Muslim Aid and the Islamic Relief Agency used these books in their schools. The Commissionerate used Pakistani textbooks, particularly for Urdu and English. Books for the other subjects were a compilation of various Afghan texts, which were reviewed by the Pakistani Textbook Board. The syllabus for Commissionerate schools was prepared in consultation with the representatives of Afghan political parties.

Assessment of Basic Education

As part of a world-wide assessment of the Education for All (EFA) decade, UNESCO prepared a study in 1999 on basic education in Afghanistan. The study was based on a number of recent documents and information collected from twenty-five non-governmental organizations and directorates of education in twenty-four provinces. According to the

study, in 1999 there were 875,000 students, including 64,100 female students, in 3,100 schools and non-formal basic education centres with 26,385 teachers (2565 females) throughout the country. The average enrolment ratio was 29.4 per cent (52.6 per cent for boys and 4.5 per cent for girls), for an estimated population of 25.8 million people in 1999. The pupil-teacher ratio was 33.7 and only eighteen point three per cent of primary school teachers had the required academic and professional qualifications. Adult literacy for fifteen year olds and above at the end of the decade is estimated between twenty and thirty per cent. About one third of the students (268,000) were in schools supported by thirty-four non-governmental organizations and agencies.

The UNESCO study indicates that the total number of primary schools in Afghanistan has increased during the decade (from 2,433 in 1990 to 3,067 in1999), and educational facilities are more evenly distributed across the provinces than before. The teaching staff has increased from 16,499 to 26,383, but the number of female teachers has been reduced from 9,774 to 2,565 between 1990-1999. The closure of girls' schools by the Taliban has lowered the proportion of female students considerably. Girls' schools represent only 14.9 % of the total number of schools. Out of a total of 446 schools for girls, 407 are supported by non-governmental organizations. There are non-formal education centres in twelve of the twenty-nine provinces and are providing a mixture of literacy and skill development. A large number of these centres are open to both sexes, providing access to girls in 62 % of the centres. The study brings out a number of problems such as demolished school buildings, lack of textbooks and teaching-learning resources, untrained teachers and financial difficulties. Regarding the prospects of educational development in Afghanistan, the UNESCO report **concluded that the strong and growing demand for modern education for both boys and girls and the willingness of the community to participate are the key to the future.**

cational policy and administration, the development of primary, secondary, technical and vocational, teacher training and higher education, in the context of social and economic development planning, during the post-Second World War period. The third chapter describes the educational policies and programmes of the communist regime during the 1980s, and the decline of education due to occupation and the war of resistance. Chapter four provides information on education strategies, including the involvement of local communities and non-governmental organizations, in the Islamic State of Afghanistan during the period 1992-2000. The effect of ethnic conflict on education services and the restrictive policy for the education of girls are discussed. In this chapter the efforts of the mujahidin (Islamic resistance parties) and the international community for the education of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran have also been included. The last chapter looks to the future of educational development and has two parts: a perspective on education for the twenty-first century, providing a baseline for the future development of education around the world; taking into account reflections and international guidelines, and the realities of Afghan society, suggestions for future education strategies for Afghanistan (principles and issues).

Saif R. Samady

Paris, July 2001

Table 19

Curriculum of Primary Education
Non-governmental Schools for Afghan Children
(Periods per Week)

	Muslim Aid		AEC		ECA		ISRA	
Subjects/Grades	*1-3*	*4-6*	*1-3*	*4-6*	*1-3*	*4-6*	*1-3*	*4-6*
Holy Quran	6	4	6	4	6	4	6	4
Islamyat	7.7	6	6	4	5	5	6	5
Pashto / Dari (1)	7.3	5.7	9.7	5	8	5	8.3	4
Arithmetic	4	3	5.7	4	3	4	4	3
Second Language(2)		2		4		4		3
Arabic		4						3
Science		2		3		2		2
Social Studies		2		4		3		3
Drawing / Art	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
Physical Education	1	1	1	1	1	1	0.7	1
Total	**27**	**30**	**29.4**	**30**	**25**	**30**	**27**	**30**

Note: This curriculum was prepared in the 1980s by non-governmental organizations for Afghan children in Pakistan and schools inside Afghanistan that wereunder the control of the Mujahidin.

(1) Mother tongue
(2) Dari for Pashto-speakers, and vice-versa

AEC : Afghanistan Education Committee
ECA : Education Centre for Afghanistan
ISRA : Islamic Relief Agency

Table 20

The Primary Education Curriculum Commissionerate Schools for Afghan Refugees in Pakistan
(Periods per Week)

Subjects/Grades	*I*	*II*	*III*	*IV*	*V*	*VI*
Holy Quran	6	8	8	8	6	6
Islamyat		8	8	8	6	5
Pushto	6	6	6	6	6	6
Arithmetic	6	8	8	8	6	6
Science						4
Social Studies						4
Urdu	6	6	6	6	6	6
English					6	6
Physical ed./Health	6	6	6	6	6	3
Drawing						2
Total	**30**	**42**	**42**	**42**	**42**	**48**

Note: UNHCR-supported schools under the supervision of Pakistan

V

Reflections on the Development of Education

Educational policies for the twenty-first century have been a major concern of the international community, in the light of the transformation of societies, globalization, and rapid developments in science and technology. The role of education in alleviating poverty and promoting environmental quality and sustainable development has been widely recognized. As education is concerned not only with the development of knowledge and skills, but also values and attitudes in children and young people, it is expected that education contributes to national efforts to meet the emerging challenges of the twenty-first century for the promotion of multi-ethnic democracy, human rights, and a culture of peace. These universal concerns, with implications for the future development of education, assume increasing importance, in the light of recent conflicts, and geopolitical and social transformation in a number of countries, including Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has been through two decades of war and destruction. The country is faced with important social, economic and cultural problems and the enormous task of reconstruction. There are short-term rehabilitation and development needs, and long term strategies for the construction of a modern Afghan society living in peace. In the process of reconstruction and the development of Afghanistan, education will play a fundamental role. Thus educational policies, in the light of Afghan values and culture, aimed at promoting peace and human rights, democratic citizenship, social cohesion and development are of paramount importance at the dawn of the twenty-first century.

Afghanistan is a part of the world community of nations and cannot develop in isolation. With the increasing interdependence of nations, international norms and standards need to be considered in future strategies for the development of education. Afghanistan, which has a rich cultural heritage, made efforts for the development of a modern education system during the twentieth century. In the last two decades, most of the social and economic infrastructure in the country was destroyed. It was a major set-back for the development of education. While some steps were taken in 1990s for the development of primary education (with schooling for less than thirty percent of compulsory age children in the year 2000), the country lacks a national system of education as well as any significant secondary, technical and vocational or higher education. The adult literacy rate is about twenty percent. What are the pre-requisites for the development of a national system of education? What are the issues to be considered in the context of Afghan society? What are the possible strategies for the promotion and development of education in Afghanistan? These are some of the questions that will be considered in this chapter. The first part will be a brief review of major studies and conferences relevant to the development of educa-

tion in the beginning of the twenty-first century. In the second part, principles and issues for future educational strategies in Afghanistan are discussed.

A World-wide Perspective on Education

UNESCO and the United Nations, in cooperation with other organizations, have organized several world-wide conferences to reflect on the development of education, and propose strategies for the twenty-first century. The conferences were preceded by the establishment of two International Commissions: 1) The International Commission on Education for the twenty-first century, which was chaired by Jacque Delors, the former President of the European Commission, and published its report in 1996, entitled *Learning: the Treasure Within.* 2) The World Commission on Culture and Development, chaired by Javier Perez de Cuellar, former Secretary General of the United Nations, which published its report in 1995, entitled *Our Creative Diversity.*

The International Commission on Education for the twenty-first century recommended the following four pillars as the foundation of education: a) **Learning to know**, by combining a sufficiently broad general knowledge with the opportunity to work in depth on a small number of subjects. This also means learning to learn, so as to benefit from the opportunities education provides throughout life. b) **Learning to do**, in order to acquire not only an occupational skill but also, more broadly, the competence to deal with many situations and work in teams. It also means learning to do in the context of young peoples' various social and work experiences which may be informal, as a result of the local or national context, or formal, involving courses, alternating study and work. c) **Learning to live together**, by developing an understanding of other people, and an appreciation of interdependence - carrying out joint projects and learning to manage conflicts - in a spirit of respect for the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace. d) **Learning to be**, so as better to develop one's personality and be able to act with ever-greater autonomy, judgment and personal responsibility. In that connection, education must not disregard any aspect of a person's potential: memory, reasoning, aesthetic sense, physical capacities and communication skills.

The World Commission on Culture and Development considered issues related to building a cultural insight into the broader development strategies. The Report of the Commission showed how culture shapes all our thinking, imagining and behaviour. It is the transmission of behaviour as well as a dynamic source for change, creativity, freedom and the awakening of innovative opportunities. For groups and societies, culture is energy, inspiration and empowerment, as well as the knowledge and acknowledgement of diversity. On 'Children and Young People' the Report states that roughly one-fifth of the world's population is in the fifteen to twenty-four age group; in the developing world, they will soon make up some fifty percent of the population. No generation in the history of humanity has ever been faced with such a swift and far-reaching transformation. There is a special need to protect young people against exploitation and neglect. How to ensure their economic inclusion, civic and cultural participation, and health and educational needs? How can societies respond to their aspirations and dreams? How can they give them jobs and a sense of meaning in their lives? How to construct a world in which the defences of peace are built in young minds?

The recent world-wide conferences relevant to the future development of education are the following:

- The World Education Forum (Dakar, April, 2000)
- Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Hamburg, July, 1997)
- Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Seoul, April, 1999)
- The World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, October, 1998)
- The World Conference on Science: A New Commitment (Budapest, June, 1999)
- The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development (Stockholm, April, 1998)
- World Conferences on Women

A summary of the recommendations of these conferences is presented in this section.

Basic Education

The World Education Forum (Dakar, April, 2000) was organized by the International Consultative Forum on Education for All (UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF and The World Bank). The Forum reviewed the assessment of the world-wide development of basic education, which was launched a decade ago, following the World Conference on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990), and adopted a new Framework for Action for the development of basic education in the early years of the twenty-first century. The participants reaffirmed the paramount importance of basic learning needs which, as stated in the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien, 1990), comprise the essential learning tools and content required by human beings "to be able to survive, to develop their full capacities, to live and work in dignity, to participate fully in development, to improve the quality of their lives, to make informed decisions, and to continue learning".

The Forum focused on three themes: improving the quality and equity of basic education; making effective use of resources for education; cooperation with civil society to achieve social goals through education (one plenary session was devoted to promoting education for democracy and citizenship). The Framework of Action, as adopted by the World Education Forum, comprise vision, achievements, challenges and opportunities, goals and strategies. While a number of global goals have been outlined, it has been suggested that individual countries should set their own goals with specific targets and schedules. In order to achieve the goals for basic education, countries need to sharpen their strategies and mobilize resources. The Framework of Action propose the following goals and strategies for the coming years:

Goals of basic education

- Ensure that all children, including the excluded and most vulnerable, have access to, and complete, a primary education of good quality by 2015
- Expand and improve comprehensive early childhood care and education, especially for vulnerable and disadvantaged children
- Ensure that the learning needs of all adolescents and youth are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life skills programmes
- Promote adult literacy and continuing education
- Eliminate all forms of gender discrimination in classrooms, schools, and education systems, and by 2015 ensure full and equal access to, and completion of, basic education of good quality for girls and women

Strategies for basic education

- Enhance investments in education and ensure more effective resource mobilization at all levels
- Ensure stronger linkages between education, poverty elimination, and sustainable development
- Ensure that all learners are able to learn in environments which are effective, healthy, and safe, and by 2015, attain or surpass a defined level of learning achievement
- Enhance the status, morale, and professionalism of teachers
- Guarantee new space for civil society in education
- Harness new technologies to reduce disparities in access and quality
- Reform, diversify, and manage education systems effectively
- Reinforce international cooperation and support mechanisms

Adult Education

The Fifth International Conference on Adult Education (Hamburg, 1997) reviewed progress, achievements and problems since 1985, and considered future policies and strategies for the development of adult education. The Conference adopted the Hamburg Declaration on Adult Learning, and the Agenda for the Future.In the Hamburg Declaration it is stated that "Adult education thus becomes more than a right; it is a key to the twenty-first century. .... It is a powerful concept for fostering ecologically sustainable development, for promoting democracy, justice, gender equity, and scientific, social and economic development, and for building a world in which violent conflict is replaced by dialogue, and a culture of peace based on justice".

The Agenda for the Future sets out, in detail, the new commitment to the development of adult learning called for by the Hamburg Declaration. It covers the following aspects of adult education:

- Adult learning and democracy: the challenges of the twenty-first century
- Improving the conditions and quality of adult learning
- Ensuring the universal right to literacy and basic education
- Adult learning, gender equality and equity, and the empowerment of women
- Adult learning and the changing world of work
- Adult learning in relation to environment, health and population
- Adult learning, culture, media and new information technologies
- Adult learning for all: the rights and aspirations of different groups
- The economics of adult learning
- Enhancing international cooperation and solidarity

Technical and Vocational Education

The Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Seoul, 1999) focused on the following themes:

- The changing demands of the twenty-first century
- Challenges to technical and vocational education
- Improving systems providing education and training throughout life
- Innovating the education and training process
- Technical and vocational education for all
- Changing roles of government and other stakeholders in TVE

- Enhanced international cooperation in technical and vocational education

The congress considered the emerging challenges of the twenty-first century, a century that will be an era of knowledge, information and communication. It concluded that technical and vocational education, as an integral component of life-long learning, has a crucial role to play in realizing the objectives of a culture of peace, environmentally sound sustainable development, social cohesion and international citizenship.

Higher Education

The World Conference on Higher Education in the twenty-first century (Paris, 1998) adopted a Declaration on Higher Education for the twenty-first century, and a framework for priority action for change and development in higher education. In the preamble of the Declaration it is stated that "On the eve of a new century, there is an unprecedented demand for, and a great diversification in, higher education, and an increased awareness of its vital importance for socio-cultural and economic development, and for building the future, for which the younger generations will need to be equipped with new skills, knowledge and ideals. ...Convinced that education is a fundamental pillar of human rights, democracy, sustainable development and peace...". There are seventeen Articles in the Declaration covering the following aspects of higher education for the twenty-first century.

Missions and Functions of Higher education

- Mission to educate, train and undertake research
- Ethical role, autonomy, responsibility and anticipatory function

Shaping a New Vision of Higher Education

- Equity of access
- Enhancing participation and promoting the role of women
- Advancing knowledge through research in science, the arts and humanities, and the dissemination of its results
- Long-term orientation based on relevance
- Strengthening cooperation with the world of work and analysing and anticipating societal needs
- Diversification for enhanced equity of opportunity
- Innovative educational approaches: critical thinking and creativity
- Higher education personnel and students as major actors

From Vision to Action

- Qualitative evaluation
- The potential and challenge of technology
- Strengthening higher education management and financing
- Financing higher education as a public service
- Sharing knowledge and know-how across borders and continents
- From 'brain drain' to 'brain gain'
- Partnership and alliances

Science, Technology, and Environment

The World Conference on Science for the Twenty-first Century: a New Commitment (Budapest, 1999) was convened by UNESCO and the International Council of Science (ICSU). The conference adopted two principal documents: 1) the Declaration on Science and the Use of Scientific Knowledge, which underscores the political commitment to scientific endeavour, and to finding solutions to problems at the interface between science and society; 2) the Science Agenda - Framework for Action, which contains specific commitments and recommendations with regard to capacity building in science, and the use of science for sustainable development.

The Science Agenda - Framework for Action, cover the following themes:

- Science for Knowledge; Knowledge for Progress: the role of fundamental research, the public and private sector, and sharing scientific information and knowledge.
- Science for Peace and Development: science for basic human needs, science environment and sustainable development, science and technology, science education, science for peace and conflict resolution, and science and policy.
- Science in Society and Science for Society: social requirements and human dignity, ethical issues, widening participation in science, and modern science and other systems of knowledge.

The Science Agenda included the following recommendations for the development of science education:

The highest priority should be accorded to improving science education at all levels, with particular attention to the elimination of the effects of gender bias, and bias against disadvantaged groups, raising public awareness of science and fostering its popularization. Steps need to be taken to promote the professional development of teachers and educators in the face of change. Science teachers at all levels, and personnel involved in informal science education should have access to a continuous updating of their knowledge.

New curricula, teaching methodologies and resources, taking into account gender and cultural diversity, should be developed by national education systems in response to the changing educational needs of societies. Research in science and technology education needs to be furthered nationally and internationally, through the establishment and networking of specialized centres around the world, with the cooperation of UNESCO and other relevant international organizations.

Governments, international organizations and relevant professional institutions should enhance, or develop, programmes for the training of scientific journalists, communicators and all those involved in increasing the public awareness of science. An international programme on the promotion of scientific literacy and culture accessible to all should be considered, in order to provide appropriate technology and scientific inputs, in an easily understandable form conducive to the development of local communities.

National authorities and funding institutions should promote the role of science museums and centres as important elements in public education in science. Recognizing the resource constraints, distance education should be used extensively to complement existing formal and non-formal education.

Information Technologies in Education

The application of new information and communication technologies is a major challenge for the reform and renewal of education systems during the twenty-first century. During the last decade, a number of initiatives were taken, including international expert meetings, networking, pilot projects and training programmes, on the application of information and communication technologies in education. The rapid evolution of Internet-related technologies and services is opening new possibilities for education and professional development. New technologies and distance education are expected to play an increasingly important role in the development of education in the future. The impact and potential of the use of new technologies on the quality and development of education and training would have to be studied regularly in the renovation of education systems.

Education for Sustainable Development

An international conference on the environment and society was organized (Greece, 1997), to consider the role of education and public awareness for sustainability. Education was seen as an indispensable instrument for achieving a sustainable future, integrating the notions of population, poverty, environmental degradation, democracy, human rights and peace, and development. The conference discussed relevant issues including the following: educating for a sustainable future; reorienting formal education towards sustainability; public awareness and understanding; ethics, culture and equity in achieving sustainability. A declaration was adopted which included the following recommendations for the development of education:

Strategies and action plans for the development of formal and non-formal education on the environment, and sustainability, should be elaborated at the national and local levels. Attention should be given to teacher training programmes and the promotion of research in interdisciplinary teaching methodologies, and in assessing the impact of relevant education programmes. Projects should be developed to link the different scientific disciplines to promote the knowledge base for policy formulation in the field of sustainable development. Articulation between research, training, documentation and information activities is an important concern. Teaching programmes should provide students from different faculties and disciplines with a basic culture of sustainability.

Cultural Development and Education

The Intergovernmental Conference on Cultural Policies for Development was organized at Stockholm in 1998. The Conference reaffirmed the fundamental principles of the Mexico City Declaration on cultural policies (1982), which stress "that in its widest sense, culture may now be said to be the whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society or social group. It includes not only the arts and letters, but also modes of life, the fundamental rights of the human being, value systems, traditions and beliefs". The Stockholm Conference made the following recommendations to member states:

Policy Objectives

- To make cultural policy one of the key components of development strategy
- Promote creativity and participation in cultural life

- Reinforce policy and practice to safeguard the cultural heritage... and to promote cultural industries
- Promote cultural and linguistic diversity in, and for, the information society
- Make more human and financial resources available for cultural development

Under the above policy objectives, a number of specific recommendations were made for the development of education.

- Promote knowledge and understanding of cultural and linguistic diversity by strengthening the cultural content of formal and non-formal education, in particular by encouraging the learning of one or more foreign languages.
- Promote new links between culture and the education system so as to ensure full recognition of culture and the arts as a fundamental dimension of education for all, develop artistic education and stimulate creativity in education programmes at all levels.
- Take measures to promote the education and training of children in the use of new media technologies and to combat violence and intolerance, by contributing in particular to the activities of centres or institutions specializing in exchanges of information on children and violence on the screen.
- Promote, in addition, education conducive to the mastery and creative use of new information technologies among the younger generations as users and producers of messages and content, and give priority to education in civic values, and the training of teachers in new technologies.

Education for a Culture of Peace

UNESCO launched in 1996 a transdisciplinary project "Towards a Culture of Peace", which promotes the development of national programmes for a culture of peace. These programmes are essentially educational in scope, and include activities carried out by the organization in fields such as education for peace, human rights and democracy (based on the integrated framework of action on peace, human rights and democracy as approved by the General Conference in 1995). The long-term objective of education for a culture of peace is to develop a complete system of education and training for peace, human rights and democracy, tolerance, non-violence and international understanding, which is aimed at all population groups and encompasses all levels of education, both formal and non-formal.

The main lines of action concerning education for a culture of peace as approved by the thirtieth session of the General Conference of UNESCO (Paris, 1999) are the following.

- Development of national plans and programmes of education for a culture of peace
- Improving the content and methods of education and training for a culture of peace
- Promotion of linguistic diversity and multilingual education at all levels
- Promotion of intercultural dialogue (revision of history and geography textbooks)
- Promotion of education for a culture of peace through the UNESCO Associated Schools Project Network

World Conferences on Women

During the last three decades of the twentieth century there have been growing awareness and concern among national leaders and the international community for the promotion

of equality and the rights for women in the political, economic and cultural spheres of life. The General Assembly of the United Nations proclaimed 1975 International Women's Year to intensify action for the promotion of equality between men and women. The first world conference on women in Mexico City (1975) adopted the World Plan of Action. The UN General Assembly proclaimed 1976-1985 the UN Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. A second international conference on women was held in Copenhagen (1980) to carry out a mid-decade review of progress and achievements for women. The third world conference on women that took place in Nairobi (1985) established forward-looking strategies for the advancement of women towards the year 2000. The fourth world conference on women in Beijing, China (1995) emphasized action for equality, development and peace.

The promotion of equal opportunities in education for men and women has been a major concern of national education authorities and the international civic community. In 1960, UNESCO adopted a convention against discrimination in education based on colour, sex, language, religion, etc. Many countries established specific plans and projects to facilitate and promote increased educational opportunities for girls and women. In spite of the efforts made in the majority of countries throughout the world, especially in developing countries, progress for the equal development of education for males and females has been slow, due to many factors (social, economic, cultural, etc.). Policy and cultural context play a fundamental role in the promotion of education for girls and women. An important factor in the development of educational opportunities for girls and women has been the economic conditions and availability of resources for such development. According to research and studies carried out recently, the expansion of educational opportunities for girls and women has been positively correlated with economic growth in many developing countries.

Education Strategies for Afghanistan: Principles and Issues

The policy and strategy for educational development depend on the people's vision of society. The great majority of Afghan people wish to have a modern Afghanistan as the homeland of all its citizens, without any discrimination, who can live and work together in harmony, security and liberty. In the context of historical and Islamic tradition, the Afghan State should be based on democratic principles, respecting universal human rights. In view of the present conflict in the country, the first priority should be the establishment of peace and tranquillity. Measures need to be taken for the return and rehabilitation of Afghan refugees as well as reconstruction. Afghanistan has rich and fertile land and resourceful people for economic development. Following the immediate reconstruction needs, attention should be given to the development of the economic infrastructure (communications, irrigation and a power system) as well as the modernization of agriculture and industrial development. Human resources development will be crucial for social and economic progress in Afghanistan. The long-term plan should aim at human development and contribute to building a peaceful, united, prosperous and modern society in Afghanistan. The following principles and issues could be considered in formulating the future education strategies for Afghanistan.

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The Shaping of Afghan Education

Afghanistan was a cross-road of civilizations and peoples of different origins and ethnic backgrounds. Islam came to Afghanistan during the seventh century and ever since it has provided the spiritual, philosophical and cultural context for the Afghan people. The Islamic tradition permeated every aspect of Afghan society and way of life. Religious leaders have been able to influence the political, social and cultural life of the community. Thus, educational development during much of the twentieth century reflected the religious and traditional nature of society. The nature and form of education and its expansion have also been influenced by the changing political context in the country and by the social and economic policies of successive regimes and governments, as well as by parents' aspirations for the education of their children. In view of the multi-ethnic composition of Afghan society, cultural and linguistic policies were an important factor in the development of education. Economic constraints have been a major drawback for the development of education. Cultural co-operation with a number of foreign countries contributed to the expansion and qualitative improvement of modern education in Afghanistan. In the second half of the twentieth century, international organizations played an important role in stimulating educational developments world-wide by setting norms and targets and by providing technical and financial assistance. The impact of these factors on educational developments in Afghanistan will be discussed in this chapter.

Changing political context

In the nineteenth century Afghanistan was adversely affected by the rivalries of external powers (the British and Russian empires) in the region and, at the same time, Afghan society experienced periods of conflict leading to the unification of the State and successive wars for independence. The vision of political leaders and the aspirations of Afghan people for socio-economic and cultural development of society were shaped by an agrarian economy and commerce, tribal and ethnic social structures, and a profound Islamic tradition (mainly Sunni). Education and training for Afghan children and young people in rural communities and towns was provided at home, in the mosque and in religious schools, and through informal on-the-job training and apprenticeship. A few modern schools (western style) were established in the early years of the twentieth century with the objective of training teachers and clerical staff for the civil service. Following the independence of Afghanistan from the United Kingdom in 1919, the political leaders (led by King Amanullah) considered education as an important means of social and economic development and modernization. The establishment of diplomatic and cultural relations with a

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Saif Samady was Associate Professor at the Faculty of Science, University of Kabul, and held the positions of President of the Department of Technical, Vocational and Teacher Education (1962-1967) and first Deputy Minister (1969-1971) in the Afghan Ministry of Education.

For more than two decades he was a senior UNESCO official. He was Education Adviser at the UNESO Regional Office for Education in Asia and the Pacific in Bangkok (1967-1968), Director of the UNRWA/UNESCO Department of Education in Beirut/Amman (1971-1976) and Director of the Division of Science, Technical and Environmental Education at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris (1977-1991). After retiring from UNESCO, he continued as an international education consultant.

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Preface

At the moment when the United Nations and the international community begin to reflect on the reconstruction and the future development of Afghanistan, it might be useful to remind ourselves that international cooperation has for more than fifty years accompanied the development of almost all sectors of the Afghan society.

This is particularly true for the development of a modern education system with which UNESCO was closely associated. In fact, the first UNESCO mission went to Afghanistan in 1949. In the 1960s and 1970s the Organization, together with other multilateral and bilateral cooperation agencies, assisted in the development of several major projects related to educational planning, teacher training, primary education and adult education. In the 1990s, following the Jomtien Conference, UNESCO promoted the new concept of basic education, which was applied inter alia in a number of new "Village Basic Education Centres" established in the rural communities of Afghanistan. In cooperation with the BBC, UNESCO also launched educational radio programmes and the publication of basic reading materials. In 1999, in the context of the EFA 2000 Assessment, a joint UNDP/UNESCO Report on Education for All in Afghanistan was prepared.

Unfortunately, war and disruption of the Afghan society during the past two decades serious hampered educational development. A large segment of the Afghan population, children, young people and adults alike, has no access to basic education and training. The education of girls has particularly suffered during the past few years, due to the discriminatory policies of the ruling authorities. The majority of teachers are untrained and there are serious shortages of textbooks, teaching materials and other educational facilities. To promote and deliver "Education for All" as stipulated by the Dakar Framework for Action, national goals and strategies need to be established, human and material resources mobilized, and innovative methods, including the use of new technologies, considered. The quality and relevance of education and the development of shared values, particularly respect for ethnic diversity and a culture of peace, will be crucial for Afghan children and youth. For a society which for more than two decades experienced ethnic and ideological conflict, education and training will be one of the pillars on which to build the future.

Education and Afghan Society in the Twentieth Century traces and analyses the development of modern education in Afghanistan, reflecting the changing political, social and cultural policies in the country. The author, Saif R. Samady, is a distinguished Afghan educator who was involved in education development in Afghanistan (1958-1971) in different capacities, including as First Deputy Minister of Education. For more than two decades he worked at the international level as senior official in the Education Sector of UNESCO (1971-1991), and lately as an international education consultant.

I hope that his document on the historical development of modern education in Afghanistan and the lessons learned from that experience will serve as reference for the national authorities concerned, as well as for relevant agencies, non-governmental organizations and other potential partners in the international community. I commend the document to all those interested in the educational development of Afghanistan, historians, researchers, policy-makers and practitioners in education.

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Paris, November 2001

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